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SMALL LIBRARY BUILDINGS SINCE 1890

BY

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THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

IN THE

STATE LIBRARY SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

JUNE, 1904.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

28 May 1904

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

John James McCarthy

ENTITLED Small library buildings

since 1890

IS APPROVED BY ME AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Bachelor of Library Science

Katharine E. Sharp

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF Library science



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## PREFACE.

Although it was very difficult to choose a title for this paper which would fully express the ground covered by it, yet the purpose and scope were definite enough in the author's mind.

There has been considerable written about library buildings, and the rules that should govern their erection, but most of this material comes under one of two classes,— either (1) it treats of all library buildings in a general way without giving specific reference to any special buildings, or, (2) it treats of individual buildings. The material of the first class is too general in nature to be of any great help in the criticising of plans and buildings, and the material of the second class, if collected, presents so much duplication that it is difficult to use. Especially is this true if the seeker for information merely wants to know about a certain part of the library: the delivery room, for instance. He does not care to consider, then, the whole library, but he wishes to know what has been the general usage. He wants to know how the delivery room may fail to fulfill its purpose and further, he wants to know if possible what delivery rooms he may visit to see all that is good and bad in delivery room construction.

It is, then, the purpose of this paper, first to present the general principles that all librarians have agreed should govern all library buildings; second, to follow this by a discussion of these principles, taking up each part of the library separately; and third, to illustrate in as far as this can be done with any degree of certainty by giving examples of the buildings which are very good or bad in the instance to be illustrated.





These illustrations have been in the main confined to buildings that have cost between thirty and three hundred thousand dollars, none of the larger buildings having been discussed fully. Only buildings that have been built since 1890 have been considered. The reason for excluding the larger buildings was that the author realized that the problems met in the larger buildings are for the expert architect rather than for the librarian. Only one well versed in architecture as well as library architecture could criticise them intelligently. The time limit was made because 1890 really marks an era in library architecture and most of the modern buildings have been erected since then.

The enormous number of buildings costing between thirty thousand and three hundred thousand dollars built since 1890 has made it impracticable to include all of them. To have done so would have changed the whole paper and would have made it impossible to have it fulfill its purpose. Besides, the consideration of all of these buildings is not necessary. Many of the buildings have nothing peculiar about them, but they represent types. For instance, unless there is something special about a trefoil building, only one building of this type needs discussion. All the others would have practically all the same faults and the same advantages.

All of the material has been treated from the librarian's standpoint, not the architect's, for the simple reason that the author lays no claim whatever to a knowledge of architecture. Furthermore, none of the material is really new. It would be hard to find anything new in the criticism of library buildings, for there



has been so much opportunity and reason for criticising them that almost the last word has been said. This material is new, then, only in treatment. It is a composite criticism rather than an original one.

It is noticeable that many illustrations are taken from small libraries and that repeated reference is made to these buildings. This is not because these buildings illustrate the points better than plenty of others would, but because these are buildings which the author knows from personal examination.

The excuse which is offered for including plans of buildings which are not fully discussed in the paper is the belief that a comparison of these plans will aid in criticism of other library plans and that the more plans that are considered, the easier it becomes to recognize the good and detect the bad points.



## INTRODUCTION.

It is not necessary to go very far in library architecture to find things to be avoided, as even in the last three years, buildings which have been built with the best intentions have failed utterly when it came to performing the functions of public libraries. It is far easier to point to the faults than it is to find the good points. The ideal library building is yet to be built. The librarian who is entirely satisfied with his building remains to be found. It is impossible to lay down a set of plans and say "these are perfect; build according to these and you cannot fail". Even if we should find what seemed to be a library that was performing all the functions that modern library work places on a building, we would not be safe in saying that this same building would meet the needs of even the next ten years. When we remember the rapid development that has gone on in library work, we cease to wonder why so many buildings are out of date and wonder that buildings erected fifteen years ago are able to meet the demands made upon them as well as they do.

The changes were so rapid that neither the architect nor the librarian could have foreseen them. Free access to shelves, children's rooms, special study rooms, and open shelf collections came so rapidly that buildings were no sooner built than modifications became necessary. The most troublesome change to make was that necessitated by free access and open shelves. The problem was solved in various ways, and in some it is not solved today. The Champaign public library (The Burnham Athaeneum, 1896,) while not built for access, has enabled the public to get to the shelves by





entering a door between what is now the reference room and the stack. Scoville Institute, Oak Park, built before access to shelves was in favor, has done its delivery work through a window. It is the plan to enlarge this and make a door of it thus giving the public a chance to come in contact with the books.

Happily there has been considerable change in the feeling regarding the consulting of the librarian on the question of buildings. At present an architect would not sooner think of building a house without consulting the future occupant than of building a library without consulting the librarian. Formerly there was a feeling that the librarians could furnish little help to the architect, because whenever librarians met to discuss plans they ended by setting forth very strongly the striking differences of opinion rather than the points of agreement. One trouble seems to have been that each librarian was struggling with difficulties. He was dissatisfied with his building. He had a solution which he thought would fit the case, and he applied this to every library that he criticized. He was considering the library as it would have to be to suit his constituency. Since then things have changed and all librarians realize now that each library is a problem in itself, that no two libraries have the same demands to satisfy, and that each must be studied by itself.

On the other hand, the architect is beginning to realize that library buildings are different from other public buildings and that their development forms a distinctively promising feature in American architecture. The architect must consider three things in building a library; the books, the public, and the librarian,





and each must be given equal justice. As the librarian can often furnish vital information concerning the books and the public, it is only natural that he should be made a member of the building committee.

After so much talk of failure, the question naturally arises: Can the architect so plan a building that it may comply with all the requirements laid down by the librarians and still produce a building that is pleasing and dignified enough for a library? While architects feel that oftentimes the problem is a difficult one, yet few of them will admit that the library building is beyond their ability. Of course the combination of hostile requirements into a harmonious scheme shows considerable skill. He must combine convenience, strength and beauty. The combination may be difficult, but it must be accomplished or there is no architecture. Compromise is not combination. Generally the hostility between beauty and utility is more apparent than real. By the proper amount of study, use and convenience, constructive necessity, and artistic effects can be combined. The designs must not be marred by the demands of utility. A competent architect can always combine the useful and the beautiful. However the fact that the library building is monumental, beautiful, dignified, and everything else that a library should be, except useful, does not save the building from being a failure. It is built for a purpose. It has a function to perform in the community. If it fails in this, it is a total failure. The locomotive that fails to pull the train attached is a failure, no matter how artistically it may be constructed. The Boston public library is one sample of the library that is truly monumental and



still almost a failure. The Library of Congress was a <sup>A</sup> failure in the same way, but fortunately it was so constructed that by changing partitions and reassigning rooms it has been bettered a little.

The arrangement of the plan therefor must come first in the architect's thoughts. The interior needs must be met before the exterior is given any thought. If this is done, naturally there must be a slight modification of the interior, to meet the decorative treatment, but it does not follow that such changes will be detrimental to the building in performing its functions. Here is where the architect can show his ability. He must use all his knowledge of all possible forms of construction and mechanical ingenuity. The artistic expression which gives the building its being follows closely the perfect plan and the sound construction. The plan must not be sacrificed to glorify the design. The design should be the expression of the real building which is within. It should not be a screen to hide its real proportions. It is with the decoration as with the design; the decoration that conceals the construction, which does not conform to and accentuate the construction, has no place in architecture. Those styles of architecture are only permanently effective where the design is the natural outgrowth and the expression of the purpose of the building.

#### STYLES.

After the building is planned, it is time enough to determine in what style it is to be built. We may begin by defining "style" as the way uniform conditions are responded to in a uniform, rational, and conventional way. The windows are a most important feature in any building, and their treatment generally determines the style



of building. Judging from the number of different styles that have been used effectively in building American libraries, we are safe in saying that there is no one style especially adapted for library buildings. We can account then for the change in styles by acknowledging that there is a fashion in architecture as there is in everything which is determined by human taste. It is well to recognize the existence of a fashion which is entirely proper if kept within the sound principles of art. Architectural fashion in this country then has vibrated between the Classic and the Gothic styles, the Romanesque being the transition style and partaking of the qualities of both. In regard to the Classic and the Gothic, we can only say that they are so diverse in their modes of expression that comparison is not possible. Each tells the story in its own way.

Shortly before the time of Richardson, the new Gothic, sanctioned at that time by England, was in vogue in this country. Then the powerful influence of Richardson was felt and the Romanesque of Southern France was Americanized, and for a time the Richardson Romanesque was almost the universal style in America. Some of the most charming of the New England libraries show the power of this style. The Romanesque continued in favor until about 1891, when the fashion changed. There was a drifting back to the Renaissance style, the revival of the classic forms which showed their influence so strongly in the buildings of the Columbian Exposition. The Italian renaissance held sway at first, but shortly after the French fashions were introduced. This differs from the preceding styles in having an extraordinary amount of detail. After the French renaissance there was a decided change back to the classic in many instances. The pure classic has been regarded as best. A most





perfect type of this pure Greek architecture may be seen in the Virginia library of the McCormick Theological seminary, located at 326 Belden avenue, Chicago. Its simplicity and the ease with which it may be used in small buildings has been the main reason why it holds its place so steadily. It may be interesting to note in this connection that the Romanesque building is of cheaper construction than the pure Classic building. The Classic style has a certain dignity of expression and monumental character that makes it readily expressive of library buildings, especially in cities in which monumental buildings do not appear out of place. Nor has this monumental effect been entirely confined to stone buildings. The Sedalia, (Mo.), library is a fair example of this kind of work in brick. The Romanesque style is especially well adapted to buildings having irregular plans in which symmetry is lacking. It is very satisfactory whenever a picturesque building is desired. It is not to be understood from this, however, that a small town should not build a classic library or that a city should not build one of the Romanesque type. The library should be built to suit the taste of the community. One style will serve the purpose of the library as well as any other, so long as the plan were correct to begin with. Sometimes a slight sectional feeling may be noted. We can see that what was popular in one section may not be popular in another for some time. We can see an example of this in the tower libraries that were so popular in the Northwest, especially, along about 1896. The University of Illinois library is an example. Few of this type of library have been built since then in the north, but we can see that it is gaining favor in the south. The University of West Virginia





library, 1903, is a sample.

oftentimes it is possible to trace relationship of buildings. They show the influence of earlier buildings. For instance, the Boston public library shows a striking similarity to Saint Genevieve library of Paris. Many of the smaller libraries are similar in style to the Boston public library; among them being the Lynn (Mass.) library, the Fall River (Mass.) library, the Providence (R.I.) library, the Newark (N.J.) library, the Peoria (Ill.) library, the Troy (N.J.) library, the Kansas City (Mo.) library, and the Omaha (Neb.) library. The general type is characterized by symmetry and simplicity of its outlines. In the main there are two parallel lines extending across the front only as far as symmetry demands. This is clearly seen in the Omaha, Kansas City, Troy, and Fall River libraries. This style seems to be a natural outgrowth of conditions. No effort is made to emphasize height, while towers and domes cannot well be combined with it. The only feature that is emphasized is length. By making the other dimensions more pronounced, the symmetry of the building may be preserved, without giving the spectator any conception of its real height. The Chicago public library is an excellent example of this. It has practically only two lines of windows and it is hard to believe at first glance that the building is ninety feet high. Another feature decidedly in favor of this style is the readiness with which it may be modified as shown in the quadrangle building of the Boston public library. The stack may be in the interior as in the Chicago public library. The stack may be built parallel to the main building or it may be absorbed in it as in the Fall River library. Then again,



the stack may be built at right angles to the main building, as is the case in the Kansas City, Providence and Newark libraries. This general type, then, lends itself easily to the necessities of construction that are essential in library buildings and the many buildings representing it in all sorts of modifications make it easy to copy for any individual case.

#### ARRANGEMENT.

In the general arrangement of rooms in the library there are certain ones so related to each other by their functions that they must be close together. The delivery room must be close to the stack. The cataloging room must be near the catalog case, generally kept in the delivery room, and it must also have ready access to the stack. The reading room and reference rooms, unless they are to have collections shelved in them, must also be conveniently near the stack. The librarian's room in a small library, in which the librarian actually comes in contact with the public, should be near the loan desk. In a larger library, in which the librarian's duties are more administrative, it is best to have the librarian's office at some distance from the noise and confusion of the loan desk. The work rooms should be connected with each other, and, in the small library, they should be near the loan desk. In many small libraries in which it is impossible to have more than one attendant at the library at a time, the librarian's office and the work room are so far away from the loan desk that they cannot be used. In a small library most of the routine work must be done at the loan desk during spare moments, and provision should be made accordingly.





The children's room, it is generally conceded, should be placed near the entrance so the noise of children in the room and on the stairs will not disturb the adult readers. Some librarians sanction a separate entrance for the children, while others feel that the influence is better on the children if they use the regular entrance to the library. If they have a separate entrance, the change from the children's room with its books to the use of the main library and stack is more difficult; at any rate whether it has a separate entrance or not, it must have plenty of light and air and under no conditions should it be in the basement, unless the basement is above the ground. If there is to be only one attendant in the library at a time, the children's room must be placed so that it may be supervised from the loan desk.

When considering the first arrangement of rooms, it is important to decide upon some provision for growth. No arguments need be given to prove that a library in America will grow. The library building of the future will cover more ground than is necessary in the present buildings. To estimate the probable number of readers or students who must be provided for, is a distinctly more difficult problem than to forecast the annual increase of books. Generally so far estimates have been too low and every library that has grown finds that its reading and study rooms are crowded long before the stacks overflow. It seems that it is natural that a growth in the number of volumes should be provided for, but generally the fact seems to be forgotten that an increase in the size of the library means a corresponding increase in the number of readers at the library.



## Mr. Soule's Rules.

From the librarian's standpoint no better rules have ever been formulated for the criticism of library buildings than those drawn up and presented to the American Library Association at San Francisco in 1891 by Mr. C. C. Soule, a trustee of the Brookline (Mass.) public library. Almost every fault in a library building may be traced directly to a violation of one of these rules. As most of our criticism will be according to these rules, it may be as well to give them. They are as follows:

"

1. A library building should be planned for library work.
2. Every library building should be planned especially for the kind of work to be done and the community to be served.
3. The interior arrangement ought to be planned before the exterior is considered.
4. No convenience of arrangement should ever be sacrificed for mere architectural effect.
5. The plan should be adapted to probabilities and possibilities of growth and development.
6. Simplicity of decoration is essential in the working rooms and reading rooms.
7. A library should be planned with a view to economical administration.
8. The rooms for public use should be so arranged as to allow complete supervision with the fewest possible attendants.
9. There should be as much natural light as possible in all parts of the building.
10. Windows should extend up to the ceiling to light thoroughly





the upper part of every room.

11. Windows in the book room should be placed opposite the intervals between bookcases.

12. The arrangement of books in tiers of alcoves is now considered obsolete.

13. Wall shelving should be used only when the library is not likely to grow much.

14. In a circulating library the books most in use should be shelved in floor cases close to the delivery desk.

15. In the floor cases of a reference room the upper shelves should be narrower than those below with a ledge three feet from the floor.

16. Three feet between floor cases is ample room for administration.

17. No shelf should be higher than a person of moderate height can reach without a step ladder.

18. Shelving for quartos and folios should be provided in every book room.

19. Straight flights are preferable to circular stairs.

20. Communication by speaking tubes and bells should be arranged between the working rooms of a library."

#### STANDARDS.

After the arrangement of the rooms as to their relation to each other has been decided, then it is important that the details of construction should be carefully watched. Standard lengths and sizes have been decided upon only after careful consideration.



These should be accepted, then, as far as possible because,-

1. They furnish means of comparison, and the same term means the same thing wherever it is used.

2. It makes it far more simple to fit up a building, if standard stock may be used.

3. (most important) because other lengths and sizes have been tried and proved failures. The use of the standards insure satisfaction.

A model building might be said to be built up around a catalog card, for this card determines the size of the trays, the size of the trays determines the size of the case, and the case determines the distance between the windows and the doors.

Likewise in the stack the 30 inch shelf with 10 inches in the clear determines that the floors shall be 7 1/2 feet apart. The space in the aisles of 30 inches determines the distance between the windows in the stack so that each window shall come opposite an aisle. The greatest distance that daylight will carry with sufficient strength so that titles may be read by it is 25 feet, so that nowhere can a stack that is lighted from one side have a width of more than 25 feet, if natural light is expected to be used. A stack which is lighted from both sides should not be more than 40 feet wide. Light coming through the skylight in the stack does not do so well in practice as in theory. Even if the floors are of glass and spaces are left between the stacks and the floors so that as little light as possible is cut off, yet the light is so scattered and the dangers of leakage and ruin to bindings is so great that it has been conceded that the skylight in the stack is a fai-



lure. The 30 inch shelf should be used throughout the building, so that a shelf full of books in one part of the building corresponds to one in any other part. This makes it easier to move books from one place to another. This length of shelf determines the size of the standard book truck, and this in turn determines the size of the elevator, and so on throughout the building.

Standards of all sorts should be used whenever they are recognized. Many other standards and details of construction that require too much explanation to make them clear by themselves will be considered in connection with the various departments in which they are used.

Perhaps the most logical way of considering the various departments of libraries would be to take them up in order of their importance to the public. They would then be

- (1) Rooms occupied and used by the public
- (2) Rooms occupied by the books
- (3) Rooms used by the library staff; the administration rooms.

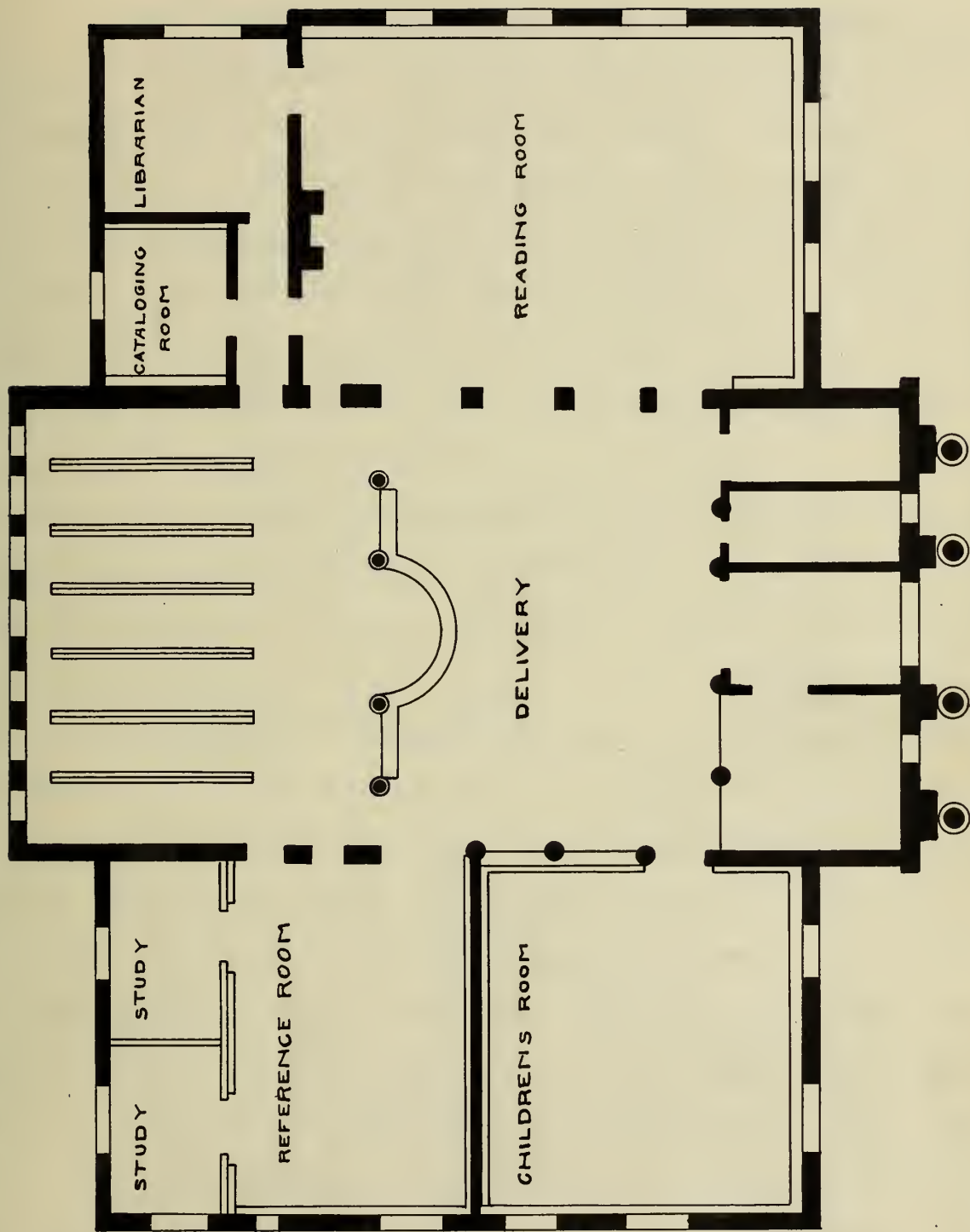
Under this arrangement we will consider the delivery room first.  
Delivery Room.-

Its importance is soon realized when we remember that every patron of the library uses it, and that it is through this room that the books reach the public and that upon its convenience depends the whole service of the library.

The fault that is found in most delivery rooms is that too much ornamentation is attempted. The space is too large. The rotunda idea is carried out too fully. The loan desk is the most important feature of the delivery room; therefore, in locating it two things must be considered.







DECATUR, ILL. PUBLIC LIBRARY





1. That there must be easy access to the books from it.
2. That it must be of easy access for the public.

The second is the condition that most libraries fail to fulfil. It is generally best for reasons of convenience to have the delivery room on the main floor near the main entrance. In the Pawtucket (R.I.) public library the delivery desk, centrally located, may be readily reached by means of side door entrances. This scheme is so simple and the plan is the regular symmetrical one that it is surprising that this scheme is not more generally used. Naturally enough the loan desk and the delivery room form the nucleus around which the library is built.

The effect is more pleasing when the loan desk is seen directly ahead when the visitor enters the library. It forms a pleasing vista. The contrast is easily seen when we compare the Champaign public library with the Decatur public library. In the Decatur library the visitor sees the loan desk and the whole stack as soon as he enters and a pleasing impression is immediately made. In the Champaign library on the other hand the loan desk is at the visitor's right as he enters and he looks ahead into the small reading room in which the Johnson bequest is shelved. The effect is not nearly so inviting. Of course the difference in the two libraries is then continued throughout. The Decatur library is perfectly symmetrical and each room is balanced by another. The reading room is balanced by the children's room and the reference room, while in the Champaign library the whole arrangement is irregular, though not entirely without its advantages. It was not so constructed without this discussion among both the librarians and

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BURNHAM ATHENAEUM

CHAMPAIGN, ILL.

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



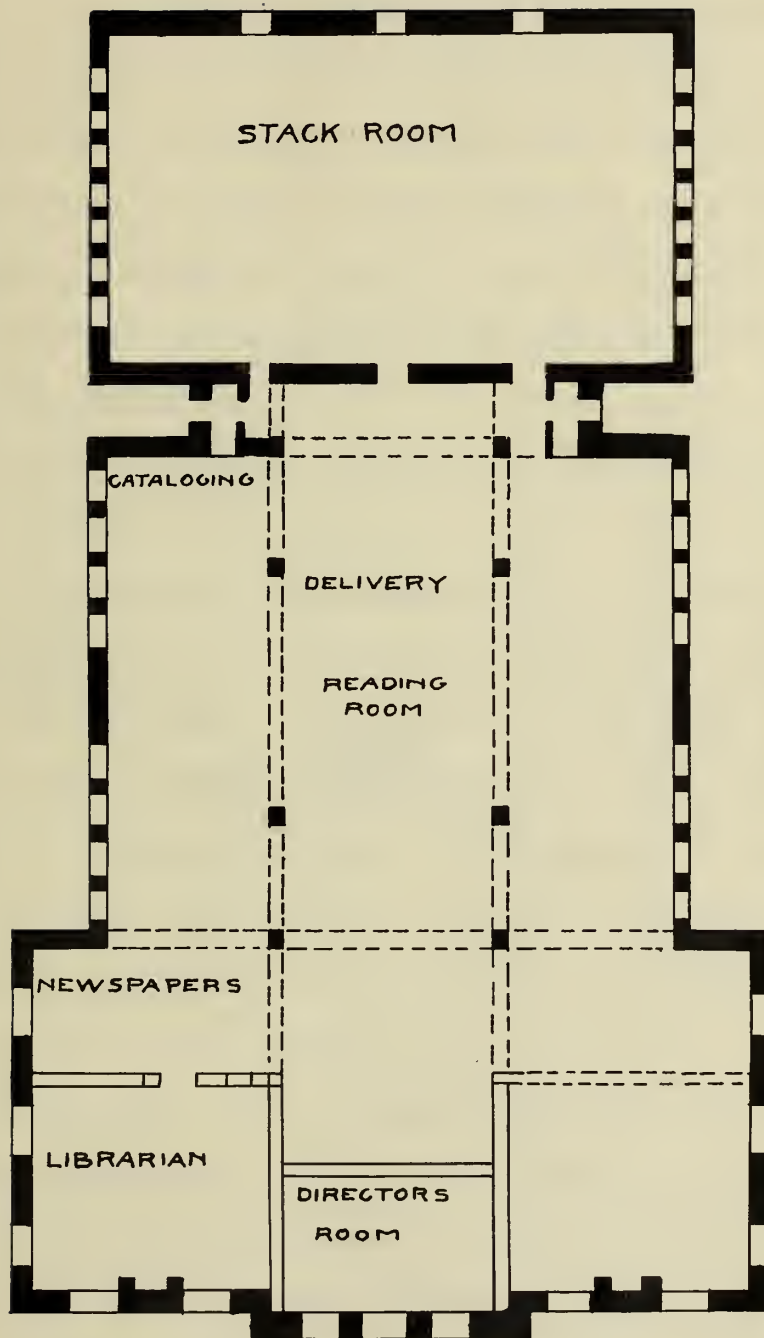
architects. The Champaign public library and the Lawrenceville branch of the Pittsburgh library are among the few libraries whose plans were submitted to librarians for discussion and suggestions. The loan desk was placed as it is in the Champaign library because the question of supervision was uppermost in the minds of librarians in 1896. The provision for complete supervision from the loan desk is excellent. The librarian can command the public in all of the rooms. This idea, that complete supervision by one person was just a little overdone about the time the Champaign public library was erected and the fact that sentiment has changed somewhat since that time may be seen in the Champaign library itself where a reassignment of rooms has somewhat complicated matters. At present the librarian cannot see the room in which the Johnson bequest collection is shelved. The access to shelves has also brought up another problem that was not foreseen. In order to allow entrance to the stack a door was opened from the reference room to the stack. This is not under supervision, the heavy wall separating the stack room from the rest of the library.

While the Decatur library is also supposed to have central supervision, yet it was not brought about in the same way, nor was the effort made to have it complete. The location of the children's room makes it impossible to do anything more than command the entrance to the room, it being clearly the idea to have a special attendant in the children's room. The partition which makes this room is only temporary, however, so that when change is necessary it can be accomplished without any great difficulty. This change in feeling in regard to the children's room is general. Wherever the



Diagram illustrating the structure of the [illegible] system.





PEORIA, ILL. PUBLIC LIBRARY



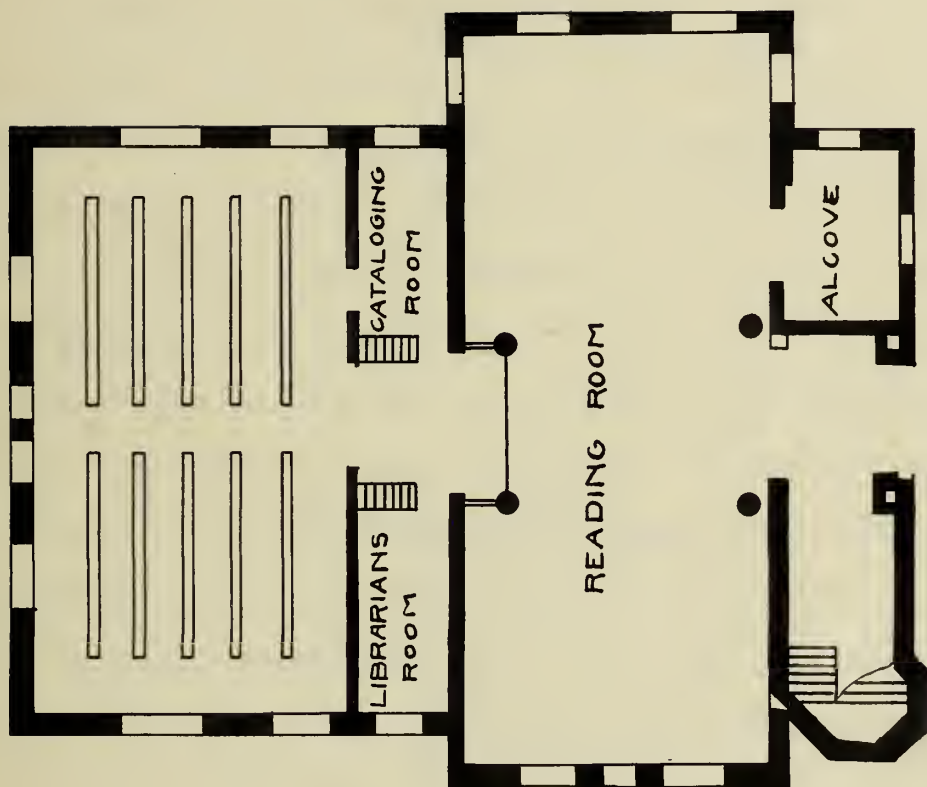
children's room is included it is almost always considered of sufficient importance to engage an extra attendant for it.

In the Decatur library the provisions for growth are excellent. By taking away the temporary partition, the whole lower floor can practically be reassigned and the rooms up stairs, at present consisting of one large one and two smaller ones, may be changed by temporary partitions and used for any purpose. The arrangement of the stairs makes it possible to go to the second story without disturbing any one in the delivery hall, but not without being seen by the person in charge.

The idea of dividing the library up into temporary rooms, each with its collection of books, is one step back toward the Poole plan. It is almost universally used by the new libraries, in every one of which provision is made for shelving a part of the books outside of the stack. This makes it necessary to have more attendants, but more attendants can always be used; besides, the old idea that the person in charge at the loan desk could supervise the whole library was very faulty. No person can well control more than three rooms, especially if that person is as busy as the attendant at the loan desk usually is.

One provision that is not always thought of before it is too late, is to make some provision so that conversation may be carried on in the delivery room in a moderate tone of voice without disturbing the adjoining reading rooms. Referring again to the Champaign library we see at once that any one talking above a whisper at the loan desk can be heard throughout the reading rooms. This would be true of any library in which the delivery desk was at the end of





CARLETON COLLEGE LIBRARY

LIBRARY  
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the reading room. The same problem exists at Northwestern University library and must be of some importance in the Scoville memorial library of Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., because here the two reading rooms and the delivery room are really one, the room effect being obtained by the use of pillars.

At first it was thought that the University of Illinois library would be a failure in this respect and it was even suggested that perhaps the putting up of swinging glass doors between the pillars around the rotunda would cut off the noise. This would have stopped the noise as far as the reading rooms are concerned, but it would also have cut off these rooms from sight of the loan desk, owing to the reflection of the glass. Fortunately, however, the trouble that was anticipated was never realized. The series of small domes between the two rows of pillars separating the reading rooms deadened the noise, so that it does not disturb the readers in the least.

The danger of over-decoration is always possible in the rotunda or delivery room. Naturally enough the architect will always want to put whatever decoration there is in the delivery room, because this room is used by every patron of the library and consequently this is the best show room. The librarian will always be dissatisfied if this is done because it brings sight seers who seriously hinder the work in the delivery room, especially if the decorations are elaborate enough to acquire fame.

If decoration is absolutely essential, and perhaps it is in some of the memorial libraries, why can it not be so placed that it will interfere with the library work as little as possible? Of course there are many different ways of beautifying a building.





Beautiful staircases and architectural effects are the most general in the large buildings, while the smaller ones confine themselves to mural decoration or artistic fireplaces. Just as books are the best decorations for the walls of the reading rooms, so the loan desk can always be made a most pleasing feature of the delivery room. It lends itself easily to decorative effect. A little grill work and the heavy curved delivery counter gives a tone of dignity to the whole library. Fire-places of a more or less ornamental character, especially in the ends of the reading rooms are in favor. They are better for decorative purposes than for heating purposes.

These fire-places appear, however, in almost every small library. The Joliet public library has combined mural decoration with fire-places and the effect, when the decorations are finished, will be very pleasing. Another feature of the decoration of the Joliet public library, or perhaps it would be better to say the main feature, is the electric lighting scheme. This is an excellent scheme of combining decoration and utility. The lights are in beautiful clusters in every place where there could be the least demand for a light. In the reading room there are clusters on standards in the corners of the room and in the bay windows. This is a good suggestion because it makes it possible to use these corners that are waste space in other libraries at night, merely because they have not sufficient lighting facilities.

The Bloomington public library made use of a successful scheme to increase its library fund by selling the windows of the library for memorial purposes. These have not been put in in colored glass, but merely have the name, the motto, or the initials or any device that the buyer wanted blown on the glass. This is another scheme



of decoration which might be carried still farther to the benefit of the library. It at least is a suggestion for new libraries that are lacking the necessary funds.

In regard to provision for growth the problem does not have much practical application in the delivery room. As long as there is space to accommodate the number of readers who are waiting to have books charged, the delivery room is large enough. However, if the delivery room is at the end of a long stack, which will be lengthened as the library grows, then the delivery room and the loan desk may become more and more inconvenient. This point is illustrated by the Northwestern University library. The provision for growth in the stack is by an extension to the rear of the present building. When this has been accomplished, the loan desk will no longer be in the middle of the stack, but will be more nearly at the corner of it, so that each trip to the stack will be just twice as long as if the loan desk were always to remain at the middle of the stack. Theoretically, the loan desk should be at some point nearest to all points of the stack. This would be at the intersection of the lines in the vertical plan. This would be the ideal, but it is not practical. The nearest approach to it is seen when the delivery room is in the right angle formed by two stacks and is also level with the middle floor of the stack. This will be taken up again in connection with the stack.

The conclusion regarding the delivery room is that it should be simple, close to the books, and of easy access to the public. It should not be over-decorated, but it should give the library a dignified expression. The delivery room, on account of the rotunda effect, is the one room in the library that is generally too large.





### Reading Rooms.

So far, when we have mentioned reading rooms, we have not specified any particular kind of reading room. Modern library methods, however, can only be used to the best advantage when the reading public is separated, so that those with special aims may receive the aid they need and may not be mingled with and lost among those whose only purpose is amusement.

There are some rules of construction which apply to all reading rooms. If possible, they should have northeast light and plenty of it. Artificial light should not be necessary in the day time. The architect should adopt a style of architecture that would admit of high windows with square tops. For a square foot of clear glass two feet from the ceiling will admit more light than will ten square feet of glass the same distance above the floor. The average library should have a minimum of eight square feet of window space for each five hundred cubic feet of room space. If light can be obtained from only one side of the room, its width cannot exceed twenty-five to thirty feet. In this connection we may consider the fittings of the rooms in connection with the lighting question.

### Lighting.

The color of the walls is an important factor as dark walls absorb light and lighter ones reflect it. This is a strong enough argument to do away with the heavy green tints as well as the dark reds that are so much in vogue in the reading rooms today. A band of glazed brick or tiles around the reading room is of value from a sanitary standpoint as well as that of helping to diffuse the light.





The problem of getting an even light throughout the reading rooms has been solved in some cases by overhead lights. The inconvenience in their use can be readily seen. It is quite a problem to keep them rain proof and the draughts which are caused by the heated air ascending, chills against the cold glass in the winter time and falls back again in cold currents. The first trouble, that of leakage, can be minimized by inserting clear glass windows in the clere story only and not in the slope of the lantern. The second trouble may be met by inserting a glass dome inside of the outer one which also has the advantage of intercepting the direct rays of the sun and so keeping the room at a lower temperature during the summer months. The advantages are that the readers may be arranged in any method desirable without any fear of shadows. All parts of the room are equally well lighted and there is no limit to the size and the shape of the room. As to the artificial lighting, it is necessary to say that at present electricity is far the best as it causes no appreciable rise in the temperature and there is no combustion to decrease the amount of oxygen and increase the gases that are so injurious to bindings. While the cost of electric lighting is more than gas, yet in the long run its advantages make up for the added expense.

The lights should always be put in by an expert because oftentimes the insufficient lighting of a room is due not to the lack of candle power, but to the poor distribution of lights. In regard to the lights that are placed on the ceiling and in rows around the room for decorative effect it has been demonstrated that where merely the points of light gave the effect the eight candle power globes serve the purpose just as well as those of sixteen candle



power.

Acytelene gas lamps are being experimented with in several libraries and it will pay well to watch the developments. At present the trouble with this kind of lighting is that it takes too much care to keep it in working order.

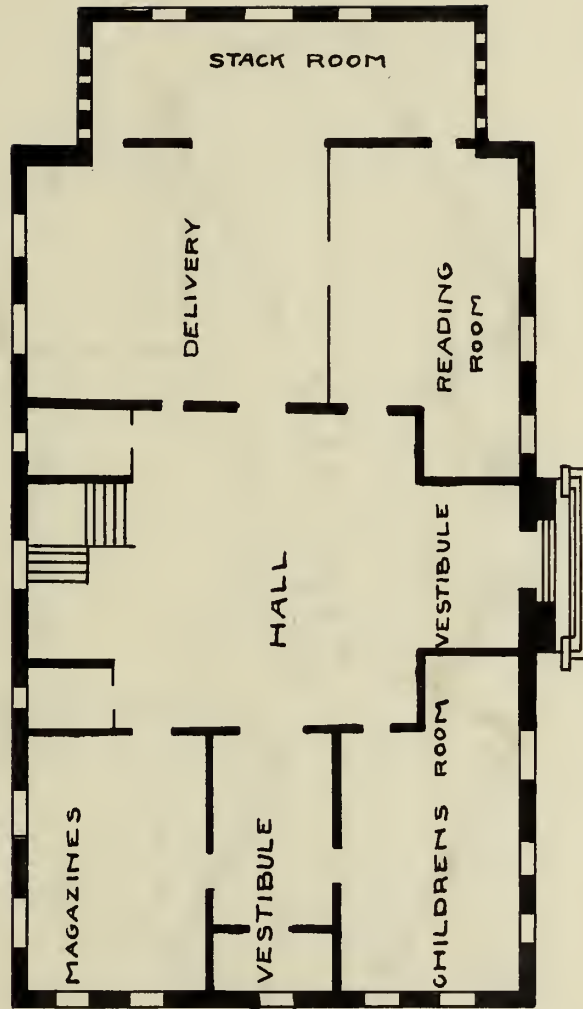
In regard to the amount of artificial light necessary to light a room we may say that it is possible to have too much. Up to a certain extent an increase in the quantity of light facilitates reading, but after a certain point is passed, instead of more light passing into the eye the pupil contracts and shuts out the light that is not needed. This phenomenon can be seen by reading at noon and in the twilight. At noon the light is just one hundred times as strong as at twilight, yet it is just as easy to read at twilight. The lights should also be placed so that the shadows will fall longitudinally across the room as they are less conspicuous that way. As most of the light secured from artificial means is by reflection it is of the greatest importance that these lights should be on white background so that none of the light need be wasted by absorption.

These hints on lighting, while they may be applied to the whole library, come more properly under the head of reading rooms because the lighting problem is the most serious in the reading room and failure in lighting facilities has spoiled the work in many of them.

The ideal location of the reading room is directly over the stack so that books may be sent directly up by means of book lifts. This arrangement has the added advantage of obtaining better natural

Fig. 1. Plan of the building.





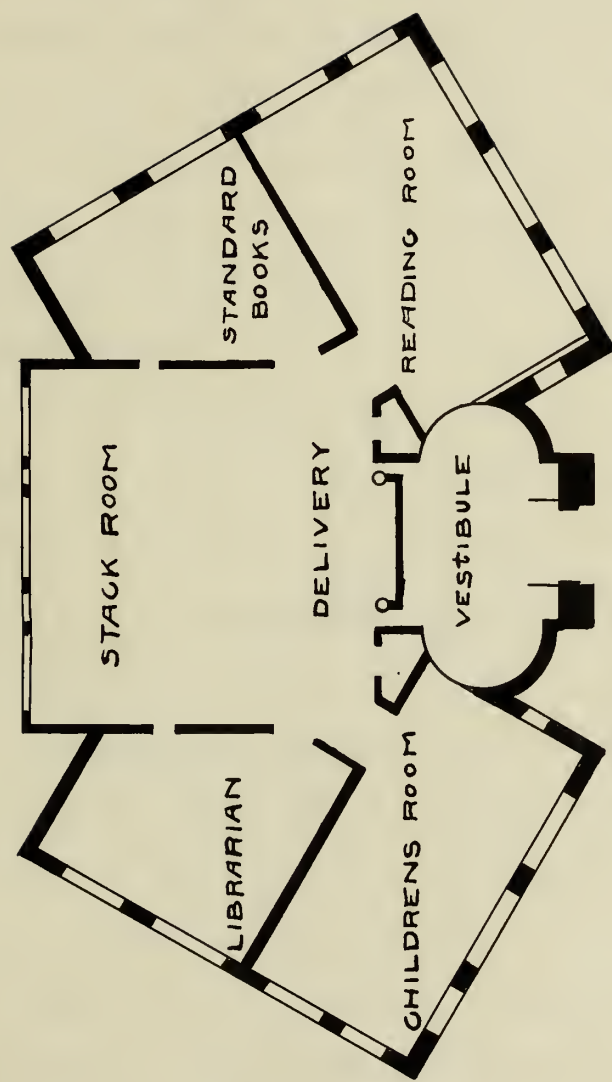
ATLANTA, GA, CARNEGIE LIBRARY



LIBRARY  
OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA





GLOVERSVILLE, N.Y. PUBLIC LIBRARY



light than if it were on the lower floor and is also more quiet and more conducive to study. Most of the larger libraries favor this arrangement. It is seen at its best in the New York public library, the new John Crerar library will be so built, and the law library of the University of Chicago shows the same idea worked out to suit a departmental library. However, these are all large libraries, and it would be out of the question for a small library to use this arrangement. The best location for the reading room in the small library is one that is close to the loan desk, of easy access for the public, and so located that books may be brought from the stack by means of straight routes.

The solution of the reading rooms at the University of Illinois is good because they are of easy access, no space is wasted, and they are conveniently located in reference to the stack.

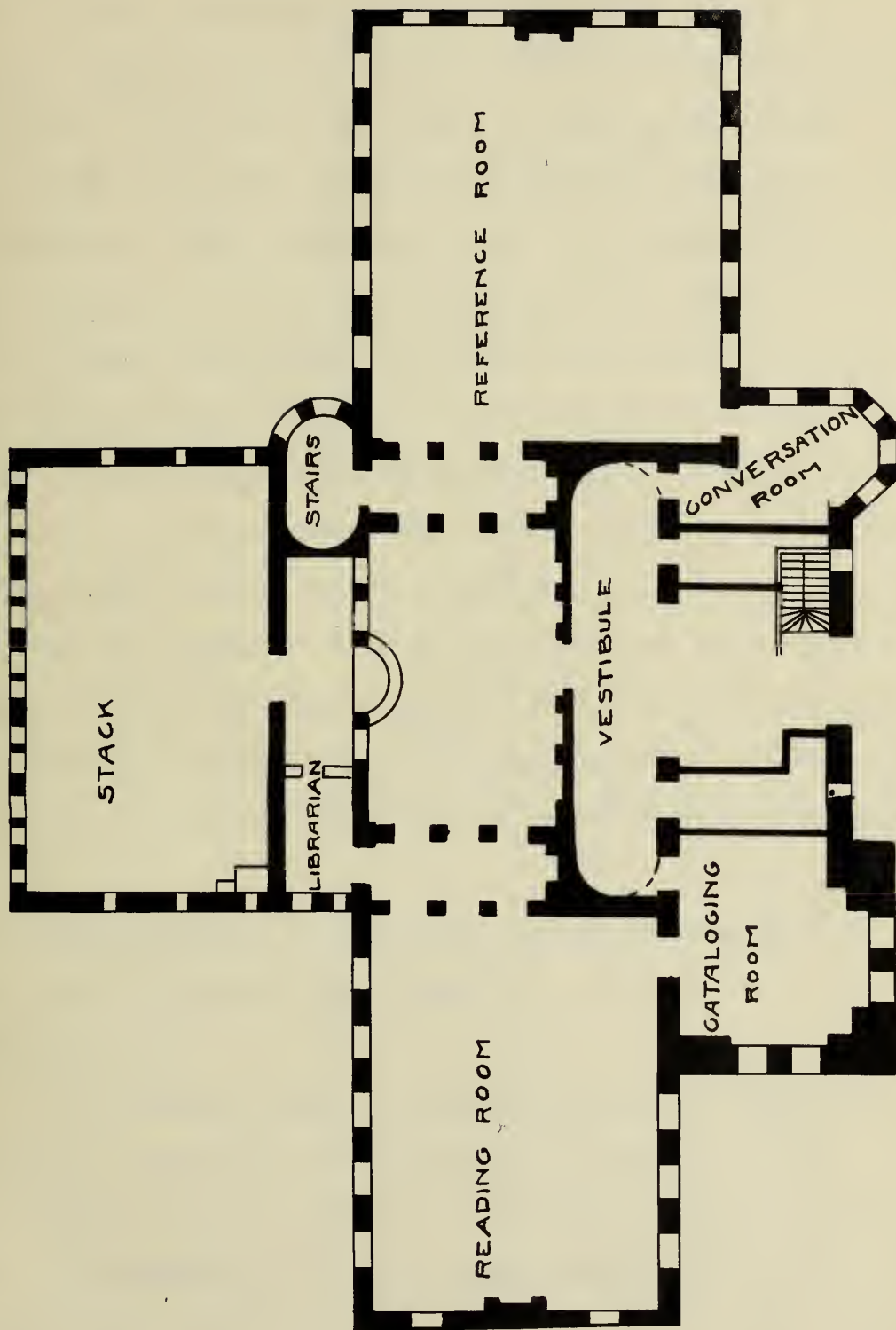
The Atlanta (Ga.) public library, patterned after that of Washington, D.C., shows how reading rooms may be arranged so that all the distances traversed by attendants are reduced to a minimum.

The Gloversville, (N.Y.) library shows how the site may influence the arrangement of rooms and still make it possible to have the rooms bear the proper relation to each other. A close study of this whole plan as well as of the reading rooms is well worth while.

The windows in the reading rooms should be placed high, not only because the lighting demands that they should be so, but because wall shelving should be placed under them. This fault of the windows being too low is found almost everywhere and it is one of the most difficult to remedy. In some cases the windows are really too large, as the upper part would easily furnish all the light necessary. A good example of how the windows in a reading room

PLATE 1. THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK





UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
CITY OF CHICAGO



should be may be seen at the Northwestern University library where the lighting is sufficient, the effect is pleasing, and there is provision for wall shelving all around the room.

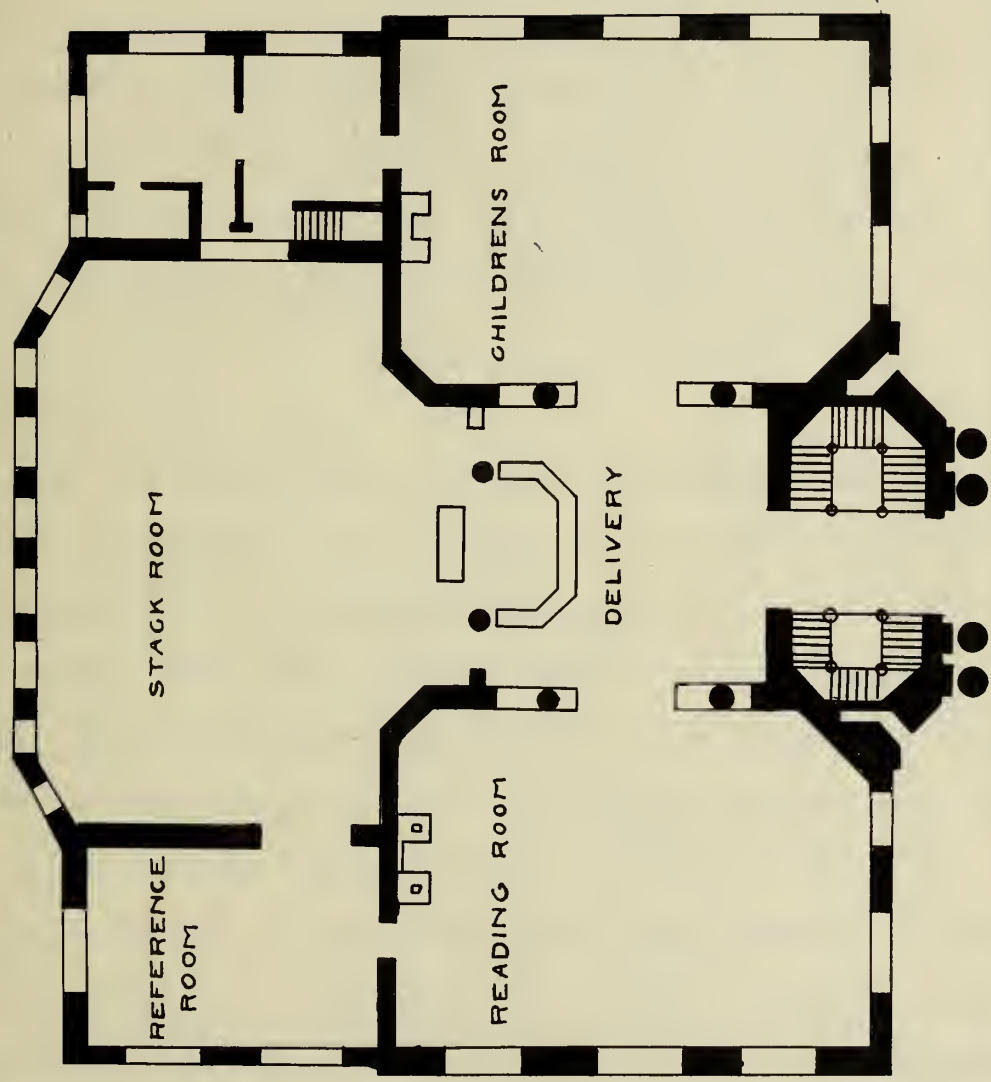
Another thing which has been well provided for at Northwestern is the taking of books from the stack to the seminar rooms. These are located directly over the stack so that the service of a book lift is possible. When floor levels are not kept book lifts are the only salvation. At Illinois University the seminar rooms are not over the stack, and the floor levels are changed so often that it is impossible to use a truck to carry the books from the book lift to the study rooms. When the library grows sufficiently so that the stack will be extended up through what is now the library school room, floor levels will be improved. The third floor of the stack will be almost on a level with that of the corridor and an inclined plane connecting the two floors will make the use of a truck possible. Probably by that time, however, the study rooms will be moved, so that in all probability the remedy will come too late.

After these remarks on the general reading room we will consider the special reading rooms used by the public.

#### Reference Room.

The reference work in most libraries has reached such a standing that a separate room is generally given up to it. The essentials for a reference room are light and quiet and provision for books. The tendency now is to have the reference room smaller and to have a few additional small study rooms to which a reader may have a number of books sent and left as long as he cares to use them. When these small rooms are not available, a substitute

一、論學問之要  
二、論道德之基  
三、論經濟之理  
四、論政治之制  
五、論法律之條  
六、論教育之方  
七、論藝術之精  
八、論科學之妙  
九、論社會之變  
十、論人生之義



CLINTON, Ia. PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



for them may be made by providing for study in the stacks by removing a few shelves. The radial stack also affords great opportunities for study in the stack, at tables at the outer edge of the stack, as they are indicated on the plans for the Clinton (Ia.) library. The reference room assumes its greatest importance in the college library. Any of the college library plans will show how much space is given to reference and will also show their relation to the rest of the library. The Scoville Memorial library of Carleton college, Northfield, Minn., is one of the small college libraries that gives up almost its whole floor space to reference work.

#### Children's Room.

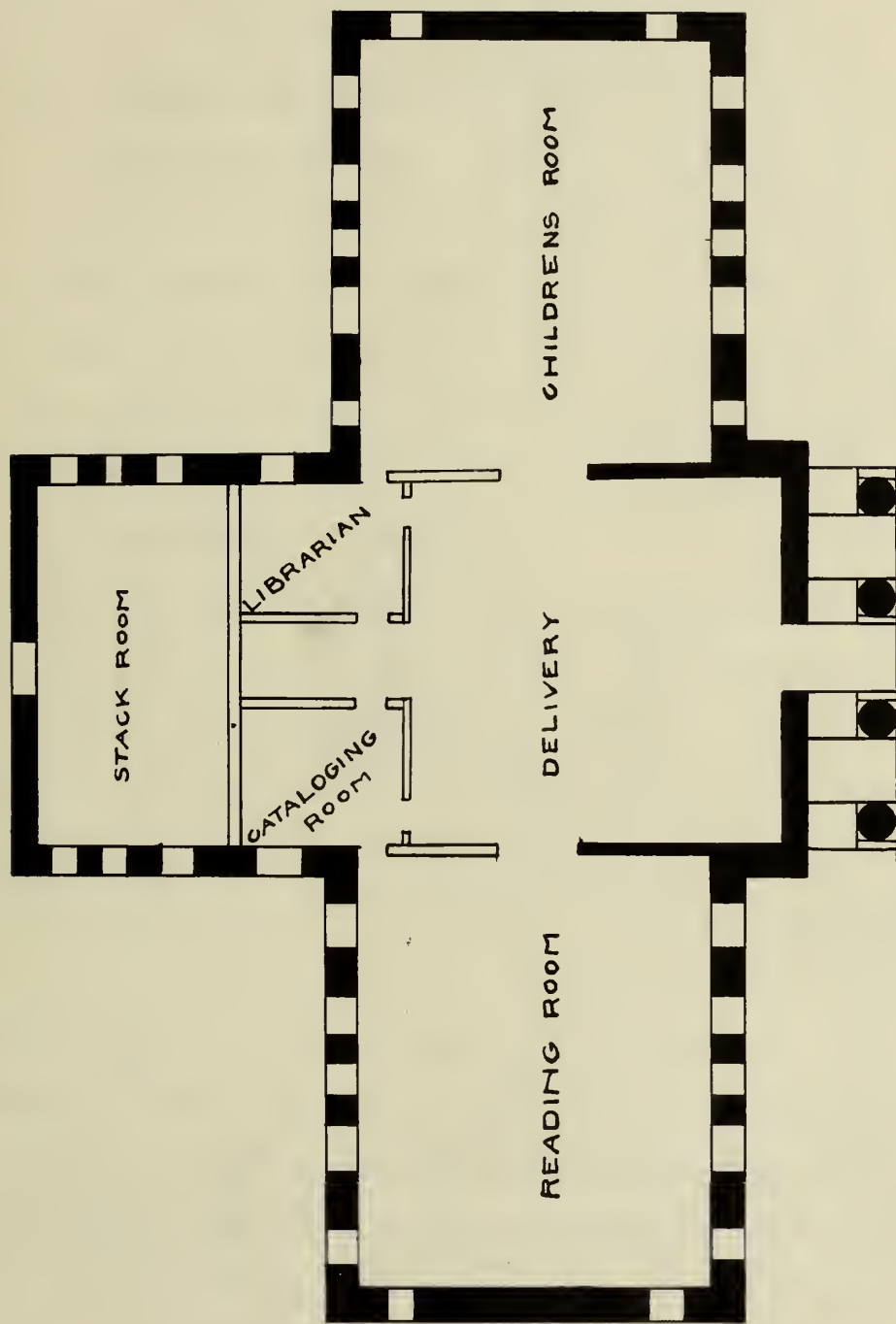
The children's room requires even more attention than the rest of the reading rooms because it is in this room that the missionary work of the library is done, and it is in here that the new readers get their first impressions of public libraries. It is hard to tell how to make a children's room attractive, and it is hard to see what makes some of them so much better than the others. Aside from specifying plenty of light and air, and a room without marble floors or other features which demand too much quiet from the children, it is difficult to be more definite. There is an indescribable something which gives the tone, the atmosphere, to the room which makes it pleasing. The best sample of children's room in Illinois is in a library that was erected about 1898, Scoville Institute, at Oak Park. One thing is certain, and that is that the children's room has come to stay and that every library should have one.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO





SEDALIA, MO. CARNEGIE LIBRARY.

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

The fact that some libraries have felt that administration would be easier if the children had a separate entrance to the library has led many libraries to place their children's rooms in the basement. This is not right. The children's room is a legitimate part of the library and should be given floor space accordingly. A good sample of how important the children's room is will be noticed on the Sedalia (Mo.) library plan where the children's room is as large as the reading and reference rooms. This is perhaps a little too large, but it is better to err on that side than on the other. Fair samples of size for children's rooms may be seen on the Decatur, Champaign, and Scoville Institute plans.

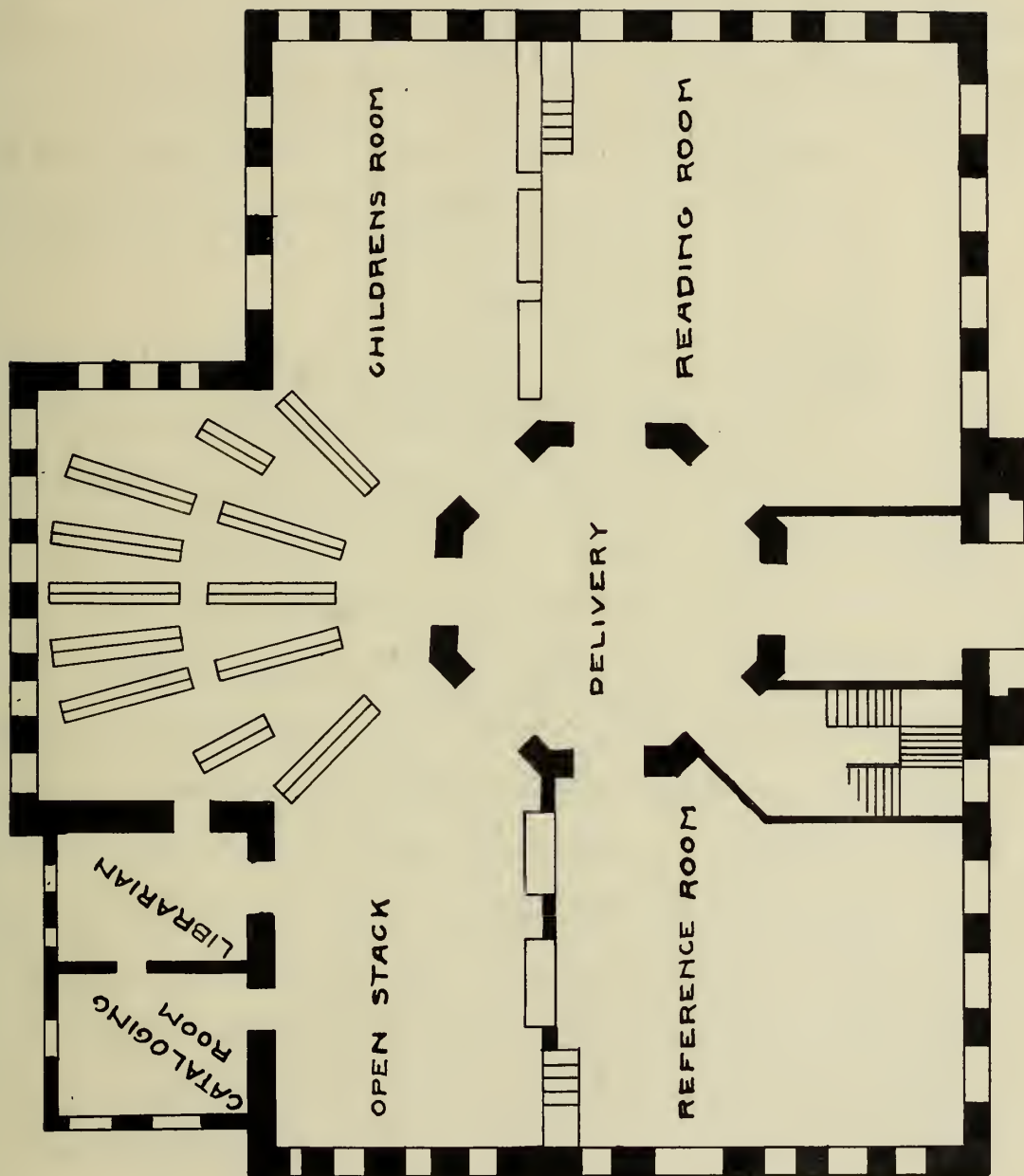
#### Periodical and Newspaper Room .

A periodical and newspaper room is desirable if it can be so placed that it can be easily supervised. The room need not be large and less space may be given to each reader than in the reference room, because the room is only used for a short time by any one reader. This room is desirable, however, so that the passing in and out of the readers will not disturb those who are doing special work. Not only the motion of the reader, but the rustling that is always heard in the newspaper room is annoying. Maps might also be shelved in this room and in here the periodicals could be kept and checked up as they arrived. This checking is something that must be done regularly and as it is work that takes space, it is difficult to do it at the loan desk, it is out of place in the cataloging room, and the proper place for it is in the periodical and newspaper room.

In computing the space required to accommodate a certain number of readers it is usual to allow twenty square feet for each

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LINCOLN, NEB. PUBLIC LIBRARY





reader, which will be ample in the reading room. In the reference room and special study rooms more space should be allowed. The one conclusion to make on reading rooms of all sorts is that they should be large, much larger than there is any demand for at present, for it is in the work which is being done at the library that the rapid strides are being made. Make the reading room as large as it can be with the available funds and the time will surely come when all its space will be occupied by readers.

### STACK.

Although the stack construction is now recognized as a permanent feature of library buildings, yet the idea of shelving small collections in separate rooms has been in favor so much since 1900 that a short comparison of the two schemes might be of interest.

The advantage of the room system is that it allows for special work to be done near the books. It is also less liable to damage by fire and water than is the large stack system which, although absolutely fire proof in construction, affords great chance for fire spreading. This is one reason why it is not necessary to go to such an expense to make the stack absolutely fire proof as has been done at the Lincoln (Neb.) public library. The backs of the books along the shelves present an excellent conductor for a fire if it is once started, and a whole collection may be ruined in a completely fire proof stack.

The stack system allows for more compact shelving, but to one who has never investigated, the number of volumes which may be shelved in a small room is astonishing. For instance, a room three feet ten inches wide and thirteen feet six inches deep with a door

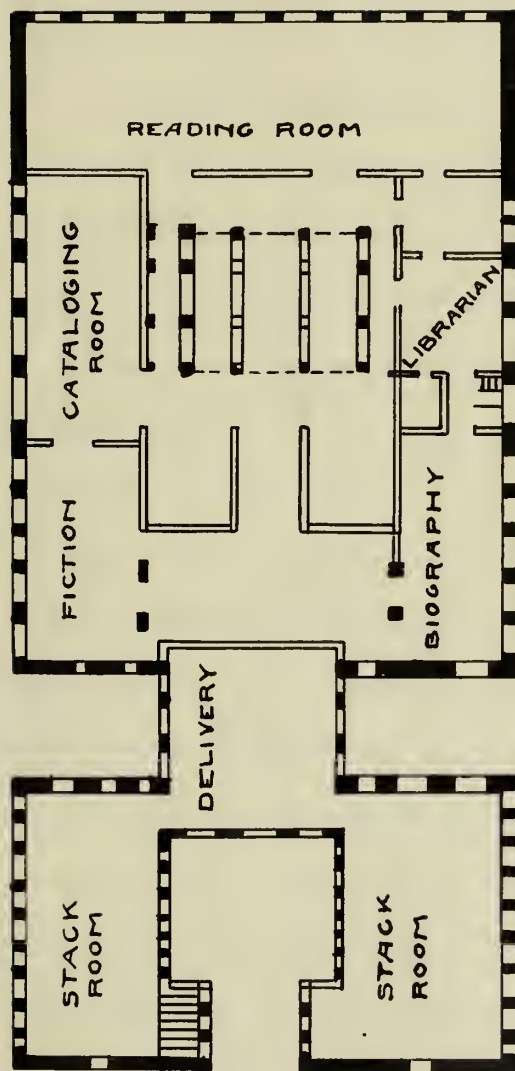


at one end and a window at the other with two bookcases placed along the walls will accommodate from fifteen to twenty hundred volumes, supposing that each case is eight feet seven inches high and that there are five tiers of eight or nine volumes to the linear foot. A room sixty by one hundred feet would accommodate one hundred thousand volumes. A building to accommodate two hundred and fifty thousand volumes could be built for one hundred thousand dollars. A comparison of costs of buildings and numbers of volumes does not always lead us to any conclusion about the value of different methods of book storage. For the stack system the cost per volume varies all the way from twenty-five cents up to three and four dollars. Any cost of over a dollar per volume, this including the necessary room for reading and administration purposes, may be considered extravagant.

The stack is generally placed in the rear of the building. It is built severely plain without and separated from the main building by heavy walls for fireproofing. The Scoville memorial library of Carleton College, Northfield, Minn., has introduced an innovation in this regard in the shape of an automatic fire proof curtain that will entirely cut off the stack from the elliptical shaped delivery room. Provision for enlarging the stack is always made. As it is usually built, it consists of a series of iron book cases running from the bottom to the top of a high room. It is divided at intervals of about seven feet by light open work or glass floors making six stories in forty-five feet, each book being in easy reach from one of the floors. Every foot of the height of the building being used and the passages between and around the cases being reduced to a minimum a stack undoubtedly offers the

# THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON





NEWARK, N.J. PUBLIC LIBRARY







most compact storage of books with great ease of access to every part of the collection.

The principal objections to the stack system are that no system of heating and ventilation will prevent the air from the upper stories being over-heated, especially as it is deemed necessary to have the building open to the roof in the endeavor to get all the light possible. Windows should come opposite the aisles and books should never be shelved directly opposite windows exposed to the sun as the action of the sun's rays on the bindings and glue used in putting the book together is decidedly bad.

There have been a great many different methods of stack construction tried in order to find something that would prove acceptable under all circumstances.

The Newark solution is somewhat of an improvement: The stack building in this case is really a separate building at right angles to the main building. The stack consists of two arms running back fifty-nine feet while a space of nineteen feet is left between the stack building and the administration building for lighting and ventilation purposes. The stack consists of the two arms twenty-five feet apart, but connected with each other and with the building proper by the delivery working space, which is twenty-eight by thirty feet. The arrangement affords the greatest possible amount of air and light as the administration building and both wings of the stack are surrounded by light on all four sides. The construction of the stack in these two wings is far more expensive than the regular construction, but it enables the erection of a stack just twice the size which would have been possible by any other arrange-



ment. The loan desk also obtains great benefit by this scheme because it gets the natural light. The cost of the Newark library was \$300,000. The stack room shelves 33,600 on each floor, while the total shelving capacity of the library is about 200,000 volumes. All of the windows are sealed so that dust can be kept out of the stack. The sealed windows are desirable in the stack, providing the heating and ventilation system works. It seldom does work in a stack, and consequently it is almost necessary to open the windows to give the books fresh air. Books are like people in this respect and they need about the same temperature and the same change of air, if they are to be kept in good condition. For ventilation purposes it is well to leave a little space behind the books on the shelves. Care should also be taken that nowhere does the heat from a register rush directly against a case of books. If the matter can be remedied in no other way, deflectors should be put on the register to turn the hot air down. Another problem connected with the heating suggests itself in this connection, although it applies to the whole library. This regards the bricking of the pipes that carry the heat. This is faulty because the bricks absorb one half of the heat. These pipes should never be covered with grating so that the radiation may be greater because the dust drops through and rises with the warm air into the library again. The heating system for the stacks remains to be solved and until it is solved, perhaps the safest thing to do is to put in the old fashioned windows that slide up and down. Those working on pivots and hinges are always more or less troublesome in a library.

#### Capacity.

For each foot of wall space available between sixty and





eighty books can be put on eight shelves. In a close stack twenty-five books may be shelved for each square foot of floor space. This rule cannot be depended upon for collections of over thirty thousand volumes. Up to that limit it practically gives the full shelf capacity. In estimating shelving capacity statistics of the library should be investigated to see what percentage of its books are always in circulation. A new library should have twice the shelf capacity that is needed at the time of its erection. The cost of fireproof construction is thirty cents per cubic foot. A building 30' X 50' X 40' for two stories and high basement would cost \$18,000. If half the whole building were given to close stacking of books, it would hold sixty thousand volumes. If no reading room or administration room were allowed, the cost of shelf space would be 15 cents per volume. With suitable reading and administration rooms it would cost 30 cents per volume. A frame building for 5,000 volumes would cost from \$1,000. to \$2,500. according to the cost of labor and materials. A brick or stone building would cost two or three times this amount.

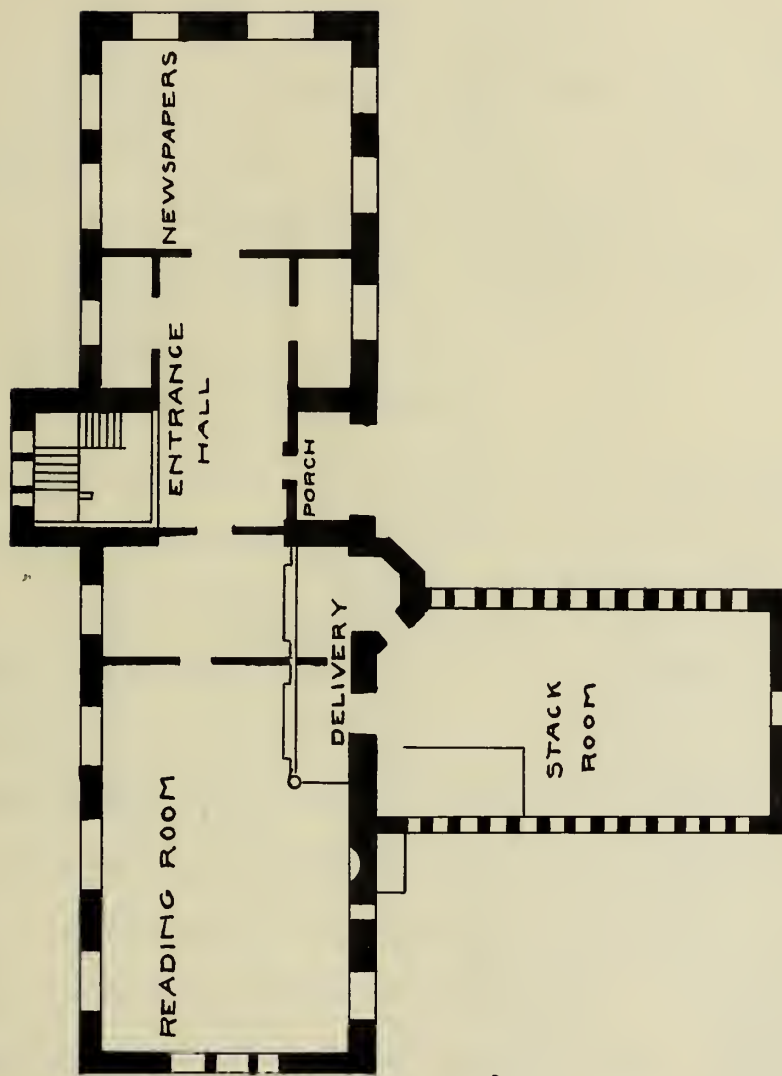
In regard to the various makes of adjustable stacks, all we can say is that each of them has its advantages and disadvantages which can easily be seen by inspecting the catalogs issued by the different stack companies. Usage is about evenly divided between the metallic shelving and the oak shelving. The latter is preferable in the reading rooms. The brackets on the ends of the shelves should be simple and with rounded edges rather than with sharp projections. These are apt to get caught in the book as it is placed on the shelf and to mar its binding.

PLAN OF THE

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY







ALBRIGHT MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
SCRANTON, PA.

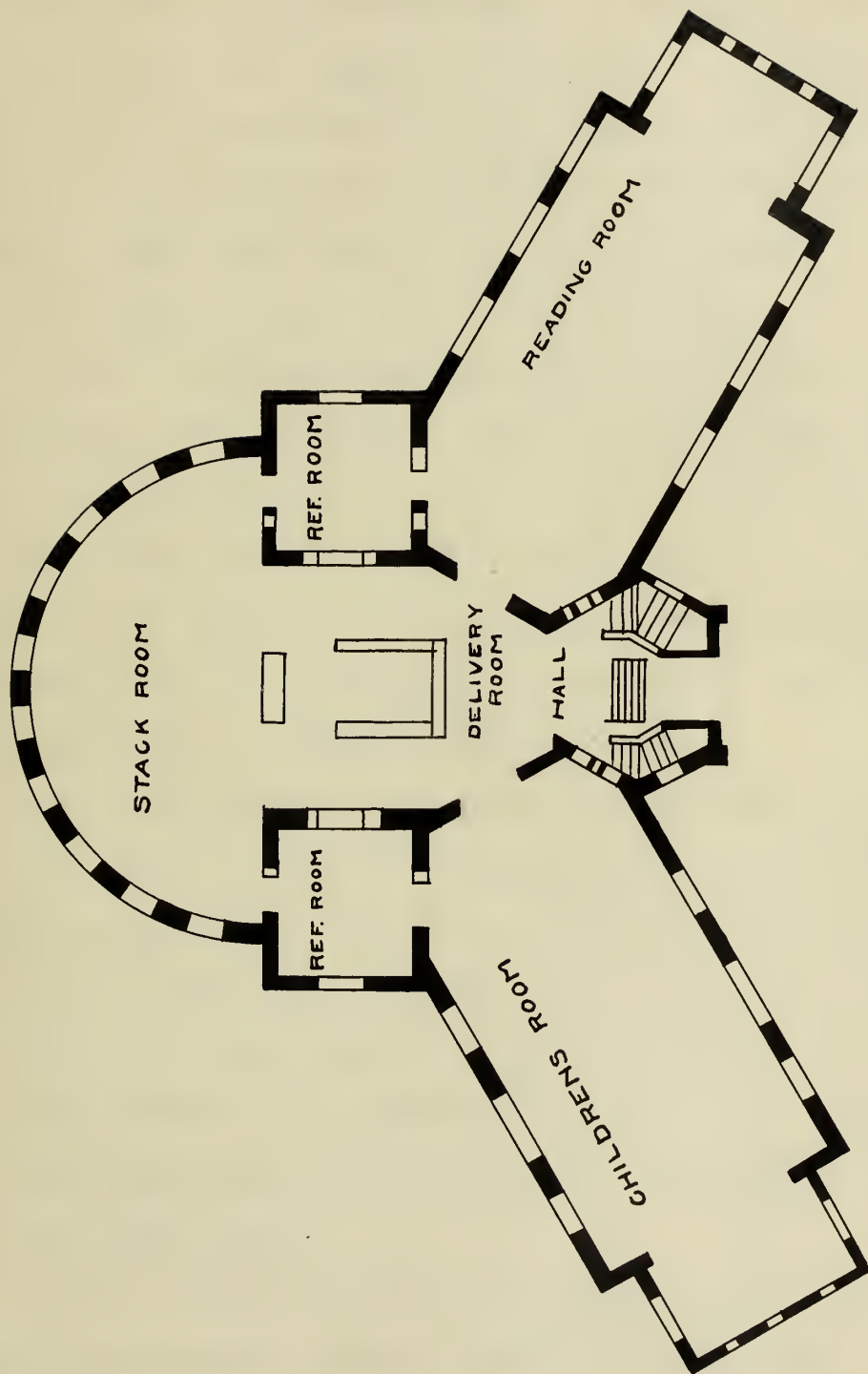


A novelty in stack construction suggested by Mr. Melvil Dewey librarian of the New York state library has been carried out in the Albright memorial library at Scranton, Pa. The stack consists of three floors. The first floor of the stack is three and one half feet below the level of the delivery room. The distance between floors is seven feet. This puts the top floor of the stack three and a half feet above the delivery room floor. This scheme affords greater convenience in taking books from the stack as they can be easily handed by the assistants to the librarian or vice versa without the use of elevators. This scheme does away with much of the climbing of stairs.

#### RADIAL STACK.

Another scheme of stack construction that has found considerable favor and which also has some strong opponents is the radial stack system. In this scheme the book cases are arranged radially in a semi-circle, with the loan desk at the center. This enables the attendant at the loan desk to see all of the book shelves at once and to have complete supervision over the entire stack. Another strong argument in favor of the radial stack is that it makes excellent provision for study among the books. At the circumference of the stack room the radiating stacks are so far apart that it is possible to place tables between them. The system has all of the advantages of the room system and also has the compact storage of the stack system. It is not without its disadvantages, however. First: the outer curved wall is expensive to construct; second, it is difficult to enlarge the stack capacity; third, valuable space is wasted between the loan desk and the inner end





WILLIAMSBURGH BRANCH LIBRARY  
BROOKLYN



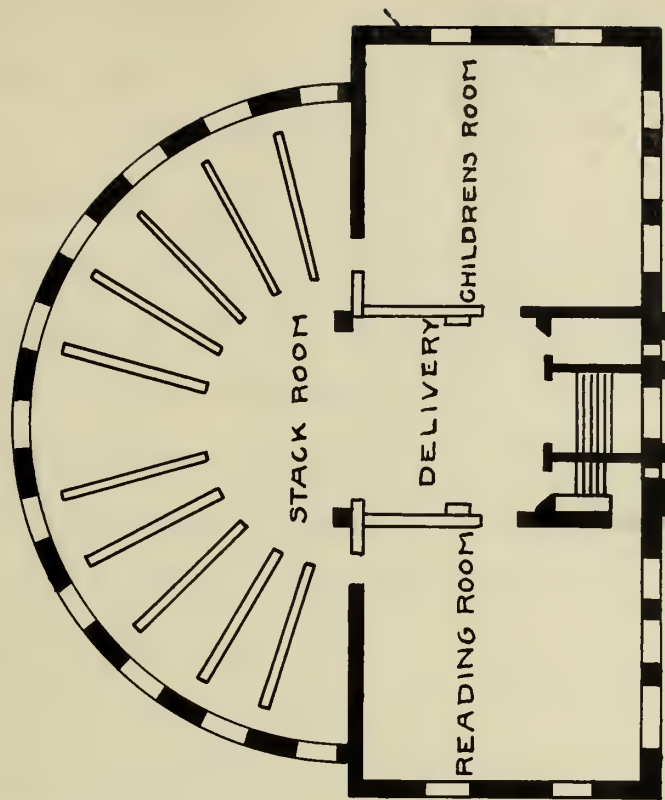
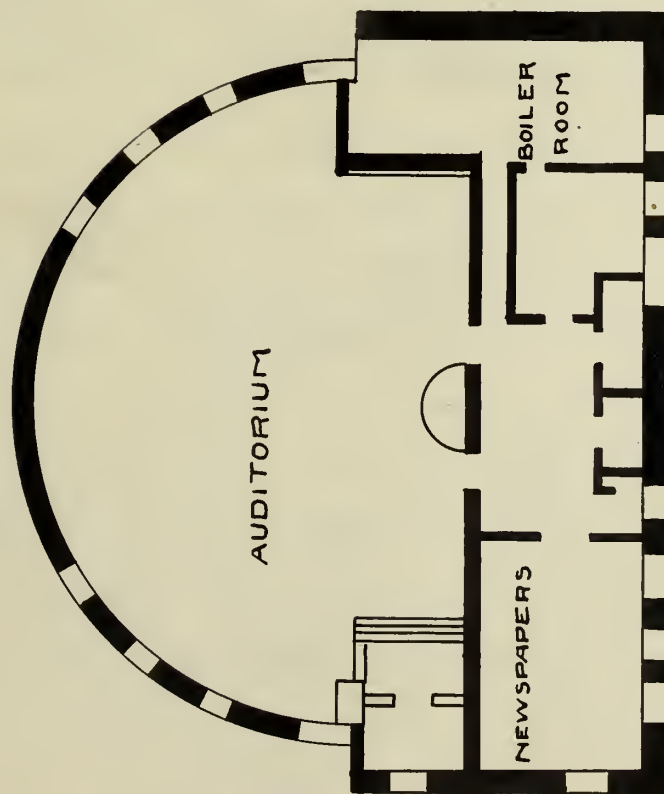


of the stacks. This space cannot be put to any use as it is not large enough for working purposes, besides it cannot be filled up because the attendants must be able to go to the stack from the desk. The first thing that suggests itself is to push the loan desk back so that the attendant will not have to cross the space. This solution is not possible on account of the light, which would not be sufficient for loan desk work. The stack was built so that the light would carry to the inner ends of the stack. It cannot carry much farther. As far as the advantage of studying in the stack is concerned, when we realize that the radial stack from the very nature of its advantages is chiefly used in small libraries such as the St. Joseph (Mo.) library and the Clinton (Ia.) library, the advantage is not so great. In libraries of this size it would not be very much trouble to carry all the books that any one would want to use out into one of the reading rooms.

The supervision argument loses much of its force when we remember that the librarian would know personally almost all of the readers and the question of supervision would not be of enough importance to change the whole structure of the stack and make extension practically impossible in order to gain supervision. It is a question whether the supervision is needed and even if it is, it is questionable whether the librarian would spend much time in watching the small stack.

In the large libraries where the valuable books are a temptation and where supervision is most needed the radial stack can hardly be used to advantage. As soon as the radial stack is extended so far that artificial light must be used in it, and as soon as a second story is added to it, it loses its advantages. There can





LAWRENCEVILLE BRANCH CARNEGIE LIBRARY

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be no supervision of the second floor of stack from the central loan desk. Provision can always be made for study in any stack by removing a few of the adjustable shelves. Far more volumes can be shelved in the regulation stack providing room for study than can be shelved in the radial stack of the same size. In looking at the Clinton (Ia.) plans the stacks are placed in the regular order and almost twice the number of volumes can be shelved. The supervision is lost, but the room is gained. Everyone who uses the stack must pass the loan desk, which is supervision enough. The radial stacks work well enough at present, but it is a question how long they will continue to do so.

In this discussion on the radial stack we have not included the branch libraries which are using it. The radial stack is a decided advantage as it is used in the Lawrenceville branch of the Pittsburgh library. Here the problem is different. The librarian does not know his public. He does not need to worry about growth. The central library will attend to that. The supply of books will be changed as needed. The supervision here has been worked out definitely. Plate glass has been used whenever partitions were needed and turnstiles have been used so that by closing the first entrances to the reading rooms the public has to pass by the loan desk through a turnstile. Other turnstiles are used to lead to the reading rooms from the stack. By having either of these turnstiles keep a record it is possible to find out how many people have used the stack. This hardly seems worth while because if the reader does not take out a book, the fact that he has been looking around in the stack does not add any vital statistics.

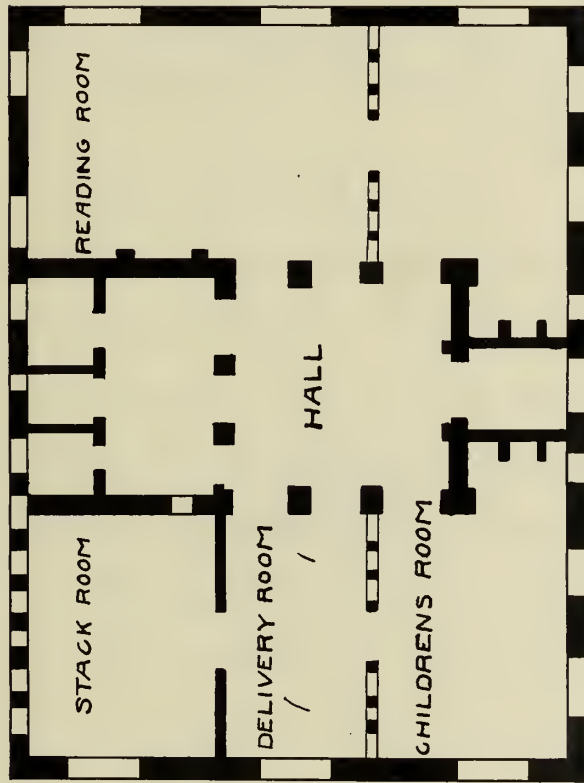
It was probably from this branch that the Decatur (Ill.)



THE HISTORY OF THE







TRENTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

library obtained the turnstile idea. Here it seems not only of no use, but rather a hindrance in the use of the stack. All it accomplishes is that it compells every reader to enter the stack through the left turnstile and go out through the right one. As the loan desk extends entirely across the front of the stack and as the stack is only one story, nothing is gained by the idea, and much is lost because the librarian always has to cross the library to the entrance turnstile. The turnstile system, however, is a mere detail. Its success or failure has no real bearing on the radial stack.

#### ADMINISTRATION ROOMS.

If sufficient space is given up for administrative purposes the problem of assigning the rooms can generally reach a fairly satisfactory solution in any but the largest library. In most libraries costing less than two hundred thousand dollars the administration rooms consist of the librarian's office and a room for cataloging. In such libraries most of the work will be done at the loan desk or by an attendant working in the stacks. Whenever the work rooms are separated by any distance they should be connected by speaking tubes. The simplest arrangement is to have the librarian's office on one side of the delivery desk and the cataloger's room on the other so that both may have convenient access to the card catalog and the stacks. In assigning the rooms the basement should not be overlooked. It is very handy to have the space directly underneath the stacks fitted up with temporary shelving for packing away material that is not needed at the time on the shelves. The rooms for janitor service, the toilet rooms, and the unpacking room can all be in the basement. The unpacking room should open



on the street and should be directly under the room used for accessioning and cataloging, so that book lifts may be used to carry the books up stairs.

#### Librarian's Office.

In the small libraries this is one of the rooms that may be omitted as the librarian will always be at the loan desk while in the library. In any but the largest library the office should be almost central in regard to the work rooms, the delivery room and the reading rooms. The Sedalia (Mo.) library shows a good position for the librarian's office. If the library has considerable space and money at its disposal, it is well to add an ante-room to the librarian's office.

#### Cataloging Room.

The cataloger's room should always be provided with wall shelving and space for a card catalog case, for as soon as the library can afford it a duplicate catalog is kept in the catalog room. The room may be in almost any part of the building if it is near the catalog and the stack. About as awkward arrangement as can be brought about exists at the University of Illinois library and yet this seems to be the only solution for the present. Here the catalogers have to cross the hall and rotunda every time they consult the card catalog. The position of the catalog room in the Albright memorial library is good, but it is a mistake to have to traverse the whole length of the room when a door could just as well have been cut in the end of the room which projects into the stack. The Salem (Mass.) library shows still another solution which is good in that the catalog room would not be disturbed by the noise of the library, but here as at Illinois it is necessary to cross





a good part of the building to reach the card catalog. The Hubbard Hall library of Bowdoin college shows an excellent location of the cataloger's room.

#### Other Rooms.

Almost all of the Carnegie libraries have provided some other rooms in the library than those used strictly for library purposes. A few have smoking rooms for the men. Most of them recognize the women's clubs and provide meeting places for them. In some few instances the women's clubs have been allowed to furnish these rooms, but this has not been considered the best policy. Lecture rooms, when included, should be on the second floor and so arranged that if the library ever wants to use the space, the lecture room may be easily changed into a reading room. The Decatur (Ill.) library shows an excellent arrangement in this respect. At some future time the room on the second floor will be changed to a reading room. It will be lighted, of easy access, and by putting in a book lift from the stack just below, books will be sent up on demand. The room is so situated at present that unless a great deal of commotion is going on nothing can be heard in the library. This arrangement must be observed because there is always unavoidable noise whenever a number of people are congregated. In this connection the conversation room might be suggested. This makes it possible to allow patrons to carry on conversation in a moderate tone of voice without disturbing the whole library. The conversation room should never be omitted in a college library because conversation is always necessary in the use of the reference room and it is necessary to have some place for the students to go to



talk things over.

The entrance and the main stairway may be left to the architect to design. Here he gets his one chance to work out architectural effect to his heart's content. Generally the entrance is good. The only thing to be watched is the lighting, as on the stairs especially this is likely to be faulty. The tile decoration or marble walls should be of light color so that the light will not be absorbed. Marble has much in its favor beside its appearance. It is solid and clean and it can be cared for without effort. The entrance and stairs can safely be left to the architect.

#### CONCLUSION.

After this consideration of library plans and buildings, the one thing which stands out strongest is the fact that we have not been able to draw any definite conclusions. We have not been able to trace any marked evolution, although we have succeeded in a few instances in showing how some buildings were influenced by some of the preceding ones. Have we then accomplished anything? Nothing definite, it is true, but the investigation has not been entirely in vain because we have pointed out some instances where mistakes could have been avoided. In some things such as style, details of construction, decoration, etc., all we have been able to do was to show the present tendency and what seemed to be the most probable lines of future development.

As to how satisfactory a building would be if it had all of the good points mentioned in this paper and none of the faults, we cannot be sure, but we are safe in saying that so long as present conditions last, such a building would be satisfactory. We





cannot dogmatize about library buildings, however. New demands will appear in the next ten years just as they have in the past. What these will be we cannot foresee. We can only notice tendencies and by adding the experience of the past we may be sure that every library needs as much floor space as possible and the fewest possible number of stationary partitions. Everything should be so that it could be easily changed if necessity demanded it. The great regret in most library buildings is because they are of too permanent a character. They are not flexible and adjustable to present day needs. As to the general plan which has been most used, the trefoil or butterfly plan, it is not to be concluded that because it has been almost universally used that it is best. Mr. Fletcher of the Amherst college library in Public libraries for 1902, 6:457 says: "Nothing could less befit the purposes of a public library than the style so prevalent where you have a rotunda with two wings. No one laying out the floor plans of a library with reference to modern library needs and uses would think of such a plan as that. The ideal library building today is the one which provides large well lighted floor spaces and leaves it to the librarian to divide them by railings or light partitions, changed from time to time as suits the policy of the library, having nothing so hard and fast that change is impossible."

The most favorable outlook exists at present. The boards of trustees and the public in general are beginning to realize that library plans should at least be criticized by an expert. For the small library this being impossible, the plans are generally referred to the state library commission. Much aid in this work has





been given by the commissions of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota,  
and the Public libraries division of New York.



## Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings.

This memorandum is sent to anticipate frequent requests for such information, and should be taken as a guide, especially when the proposed architect has not had much library building experience. It should be noted that many of the buildings erected years ago, from plans tacitly permitted at the time, would not be allowed now.

Library committees, especially in small towns, are frequently composed of busy men who, having lacked time or opportunity to obtain a knowledge of library planning, are led to select a design which, if built, would yield an inadequate return of useful accommodation for the money invested, and would unwarrantably increase the expense of carrying on the library.

Some architects are liable, unconsciously, no doubt, to aim at architectural features and to subordinate useful accommodation. Some are also apt, on account of a lack of practical knowledge of the administration of a library, to plan interiors which are entirely unsuited for the purposes of a free public library. Small libraries should be planned so that one librarian can oversee the entire library from a central position.

The amount allowed by Carnegie Corporation of New York to cover the cost of a library building is according to a standard based on (a) the population which is to pay the tax for carrying on the library, and (b) a specified minimum revenue from such tax. The donation is sufficient only to provide needed accommodation and there will be either a shortage of accommodation or of money if this primary purpose is not kept in view, viz.: **TO OBTAIN FOR THE MONEY THE UTMOST AMOUNT OF EFFECTIVE ACCOMMODATION, CONSISTENT WITH GOOD TASTE IN BUILDING.**

The amount allowed is intended to cover cost of the building, complete and ready for use with indispensable furniture and fixtures, and including architect's fees.

In looking over hundreds of plans for small and medium-sized buildings, costing about \$10,000, more or less, we have noted some features leading to a wasting of space, especially in connection with the entrance feature, which, when not wisely planned, leads also to waste in halls, delivery room, etc.

The economical layout of the building is sacrificed or subordinated at times to minor accessories, such as too much or too valuable space allotted to cloak rooms, toilets and stairs.

The building should be devoted exclusively to: (main floor) housing of books and their issue for home use; comfortable accommodation for reading them by adults and children; (basement) lecture room; necessary accommodation for heating plant; also all conveniences for the library patrons and staff.

Experience seems to show that the best results for a small general library are obtained by adopting the one-story and basement rectangular type of building, with a small vestibule entering into one large room sub-divided as required by means of bookcases. In cases where it is necessary, to secure quiet, glass partitions may be put above the bookcases. By a one-story and basement building is meant a building with the basement about four feet

below the natural grade, the basement being from say 9 to 10 feet and the main floor from say 12 to 15 feet high in the clear. Plans have at times been submitted for "one-story and basement" buildings, which differed from two-story buildings only by having stairs to the upper floor outside instead of inside!

The rear and side windows may be kept about six feet from the floor, to give continuous wall space for shelving. A rear wing can be added for stack-room (when future need demands it) at a minimum expense, and without seriously interfering with the library service during its construction. The site chosen should be such as to admit light on all sides, and be large enough to allow extension, if ever such should become necessary.

The accompanying diagrams are offered as suggestions in planning the smaller library buildings most commonly required, and will be found to include a maximum of effective accommodation relative to total area.

While these diagrams are suggestive rather than mandatory, nevertheless, since they are the result of experience, those responsible for building projects should pause before aiming at radical departures, and see whether their alternative is to provide as much effective accommodation and have as little waste space.

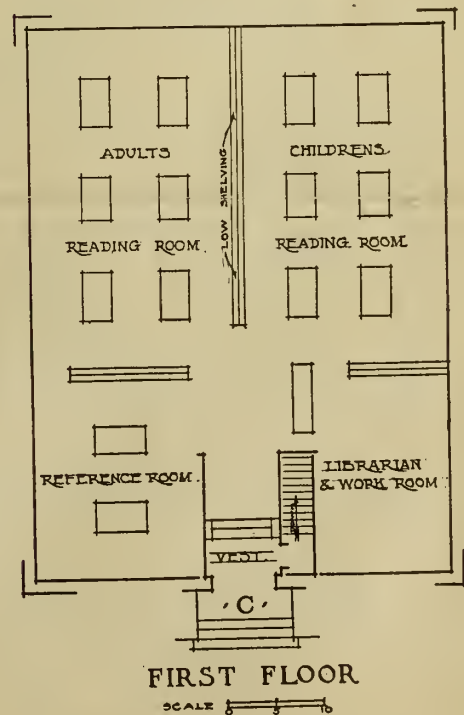
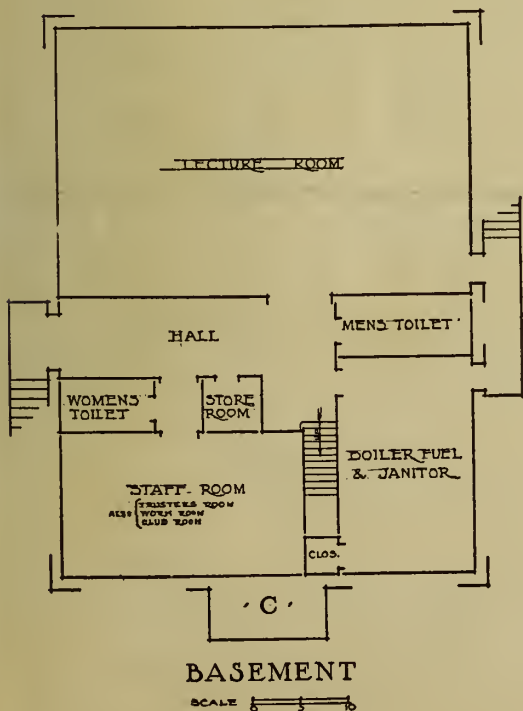
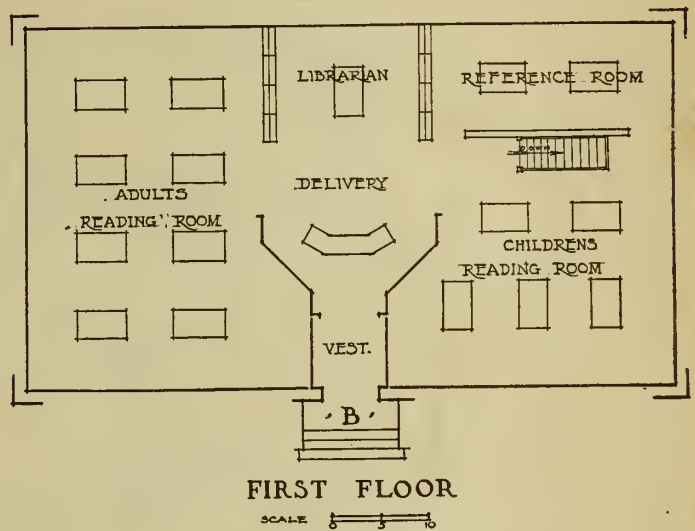
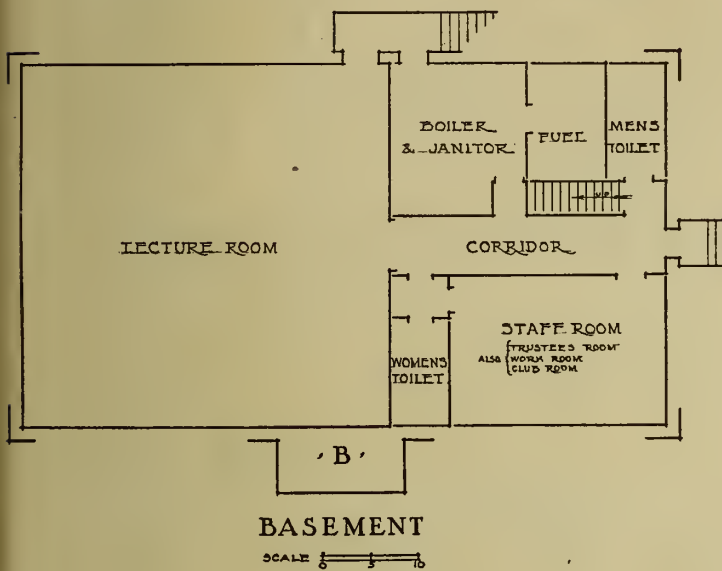
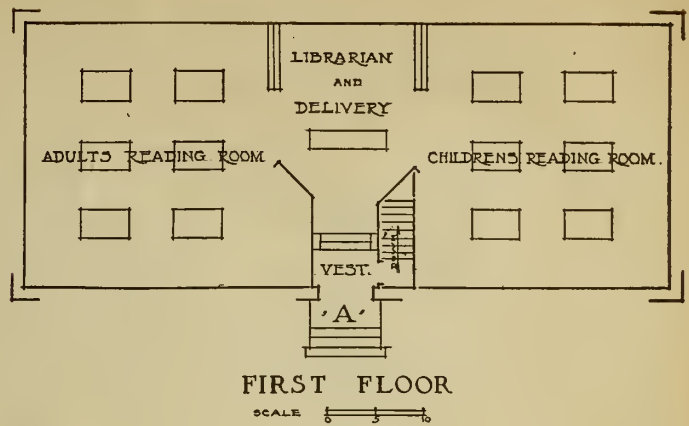
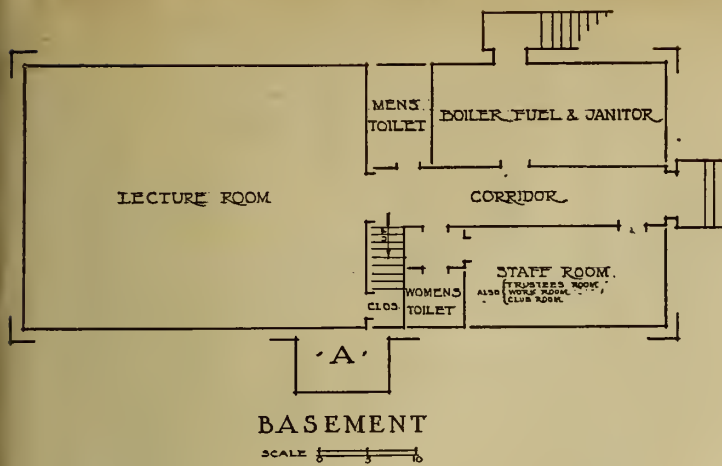
An important cause of alleged inadequacy of accommodation in buildings erected years ago, when less supervision was exercised, has frequently been found to be uneconomical plan with bad layout. When applications (based on growth of population) have been received for aid in extending such buildings, it has often been impossible to entertain the idea of making a grant, owing to the prohibitive cost of demolition and re-erection relative to net gain of superficial area.

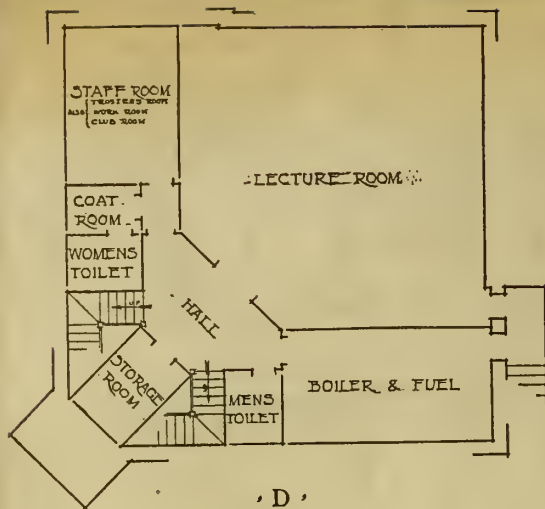
It may not be desirable to have library buildings planned from ready-made patterns, and yet a certain standardization of the main requirements of accommodation is as necessary for library buildings as for school buildings, which have been advantageously subjected to strict regulations both in plan and construction. Where architecture is best appreciated there are recognized types established for the various buildings of a public or semi-public character.

It will be noted that no elevations are given or suggestions made about the exteriors. These are features in which the community and architect may express their individuality, keeping to a plain, dignified structure and not aiming at such exterior effects as may make impossible an effective and economical layout of the interior.

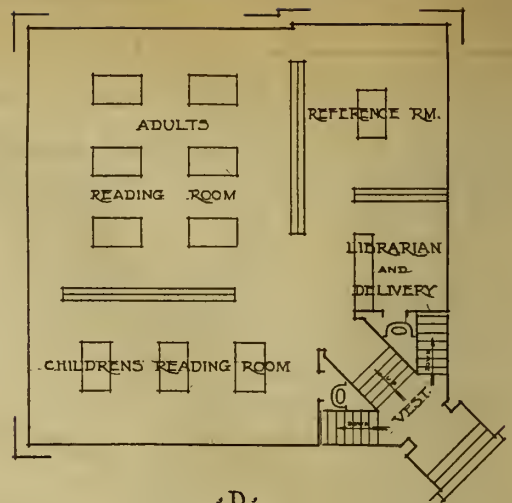
These notes are of course written with the smaller buildings in mind; larger buildings require larger and more varied treatment, but no modification of the primary purpose.



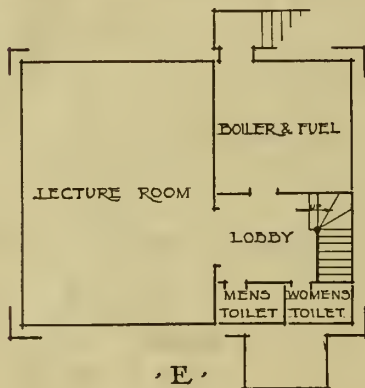




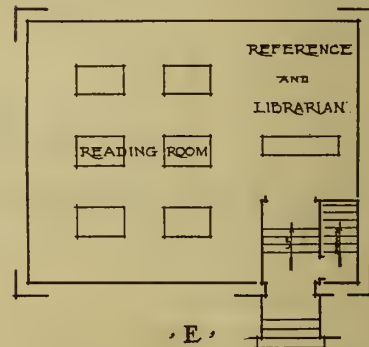
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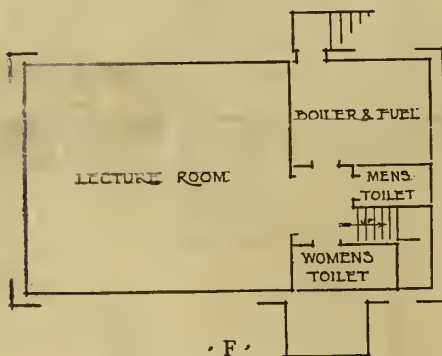
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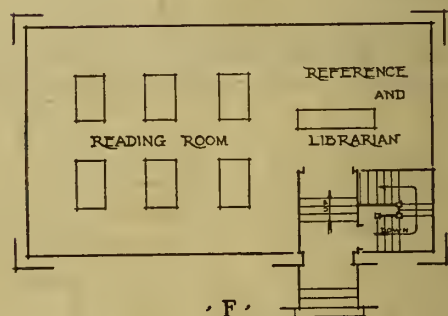
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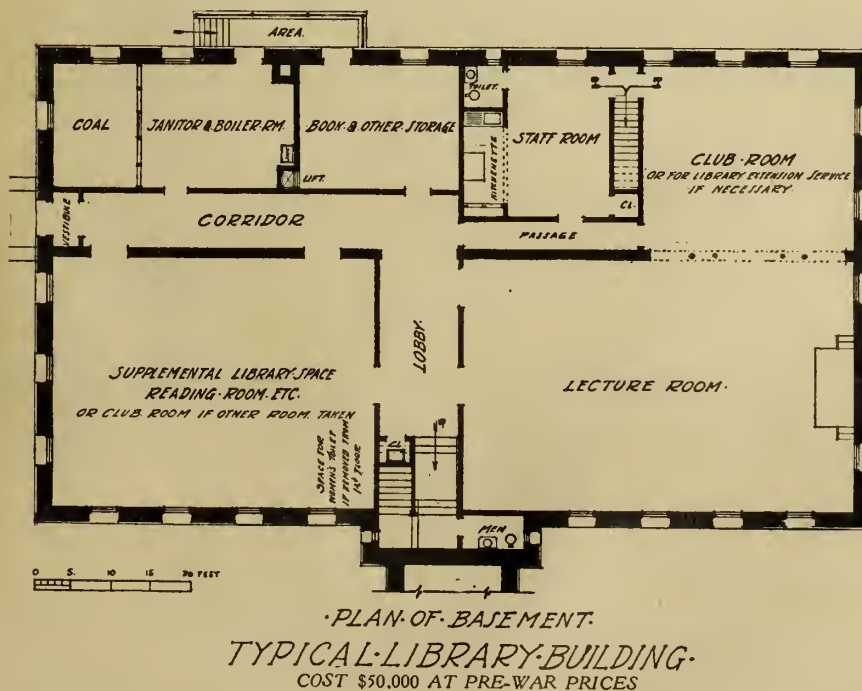
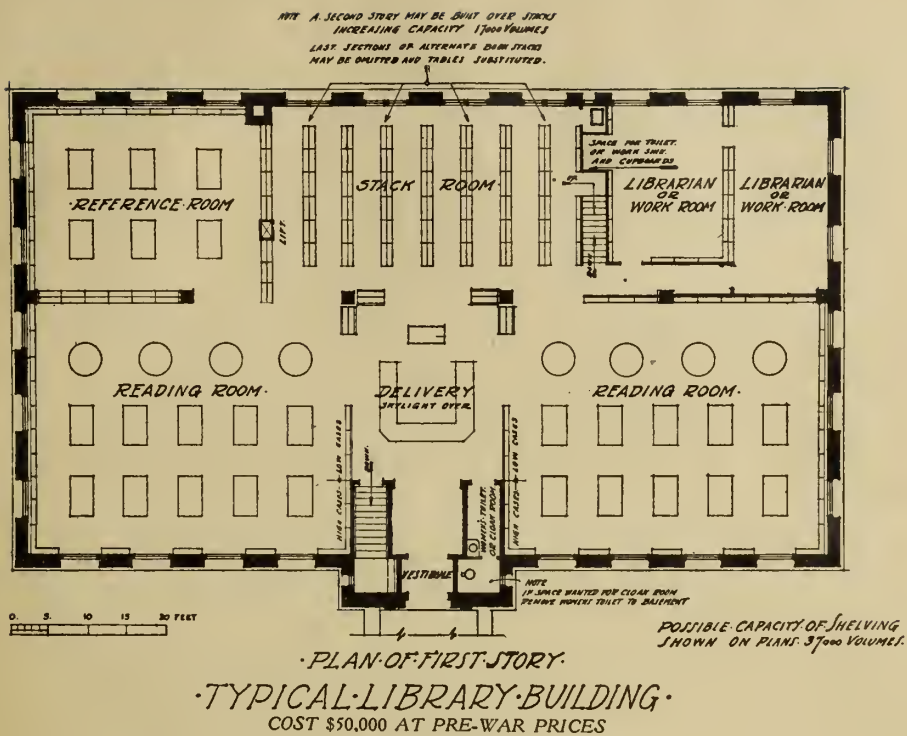
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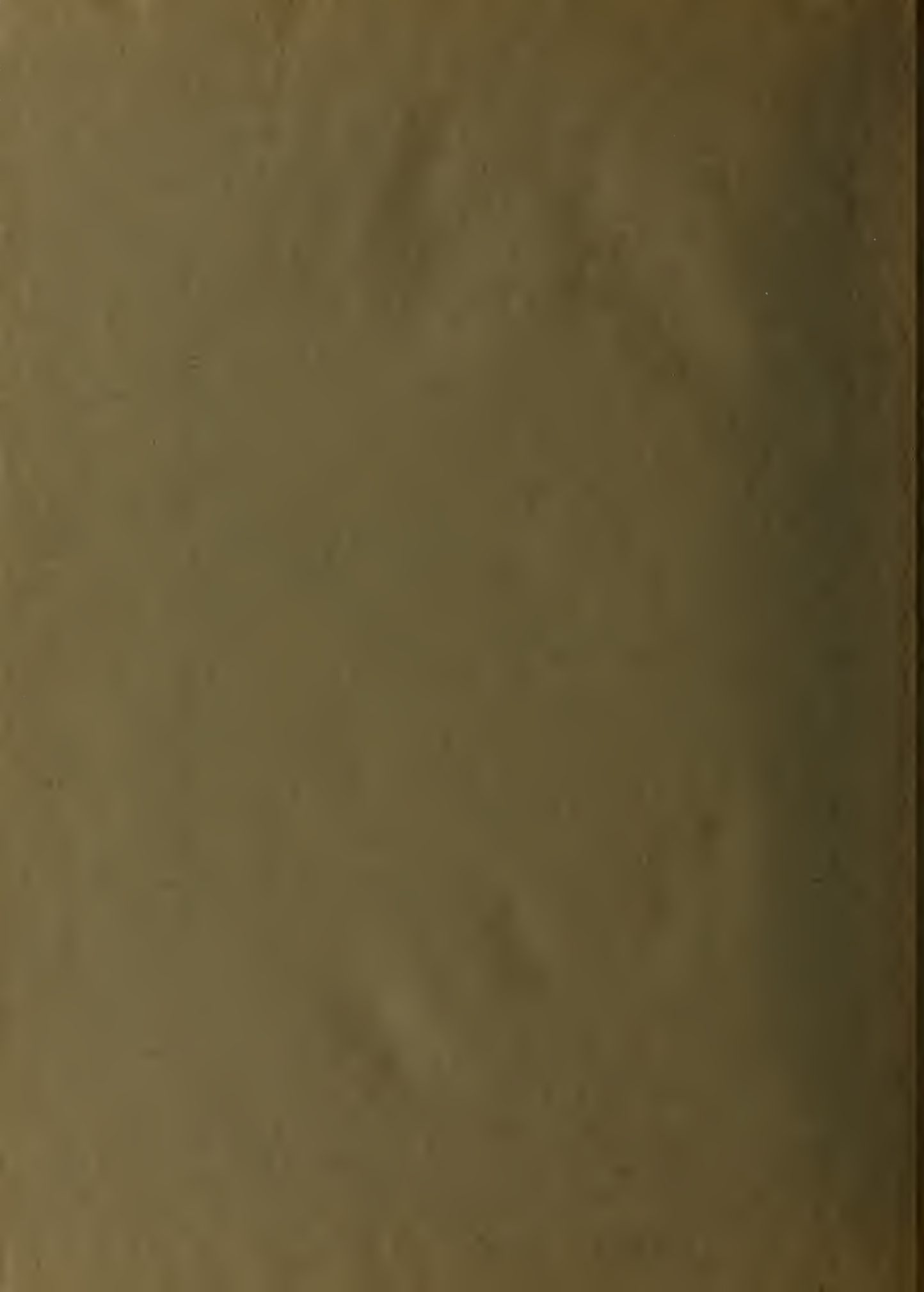
*NOTE: Elevations of plans submitted for approval should clearly sho the floor and ceiling lines of basement and main floor, and the natural and artificial grade lines. Floor plans should sho, clearly designated, all roof supports and similar obstructions of the accommodation.*





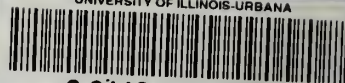
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